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THE PALACES OF FRANCE. By A. Clutton-Brock.

COUNTRY LIFE

OFFICES:

20, TAVISTOCK STREET, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

VOL. XLI. No. 1046.

Entered as Second-class Matter at the New York, N.Y. Post Office.

[REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O. AS A NEWSPAPER, AND FOR CANADIAN MAGAZINE POST.]

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20th, 1917.

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"According to Parkinson"

is the title of a very interesting illustrated article by Miss S. Hope Evans in this week's issue of

The GARDEN

(dated January 20th, 1917).

This number also includes:

- "The Fate of the South Border" (illus.) by Miss Jekyll.
- "Webbs' Potato Prosperity" (illus.).
- "Two Winter Flowering Lonicera's," by Edward H. Woodall.
- "Hembane as a Medicinal Herb" (illus.).
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- "A Column for the Curious."
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- "Books:—Miss Jekyll's New Book" (illus.).

"Gardening of the Week."

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VOL. XLI.—No. 1046.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20th, 1917.

PRICE SIXPENCE, POSTAGE EXTRA.
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* * We appeal to our readers to send their copies of recent issues of COUNTRY LIFE to THE TROOPS AT THE FRONT. This can be done by simply handing them over the counter of any Post Office. No label, wrapper or address is needed, and no postage need be paid.

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A WARNING TO MR. PROTHERO

AMONG the members of the Lloyd George administration there is no one whose appointment was welcomed with more sincere expressions of approval and hope than that of Mr. Rowland Prothero to be President of the Board of Agriculture. The management of the estates of the Duke of Bedford, it was believed, would be no bad training for one who has to attend to the interests of the national agriculture.

In some respects Mr. Prothero has justified these expectations. In his speeches, at all events, he has brought into use a mind trained to precise and clear thinking. He is pointed and definite both in making up his mind and expressing his thought. Nevertheless, the prospects of food production in the coming year are such as to create

great uneasiness among those who know the facts. Events are steadily showing that a half-hearted policy of fixing prices will not work. If we take potatoes as an illustration, the most recent declaration has had the effect of paralysing the preparations that were being made to sow more ground with them. The price offered is not sufficient, and it is felt that Mr. Prothero ought to have been in a position to know this and to give Lord Devonport advice that would not have discouraged farmers.

Another very important matter is the supply of seed potatoes, and it has been thoroughly muddled. These seed potatoes should have been provided at any rate for the poorer class of grower, and, indeed, Mr. Prothero sketched out a plan that looked perfectly satisfactory if it only had been acted upon. But he rather placed himself in the position of the son in the parable who said: "I go, Sir"; and went not. Where seed potatoes are being provided on equitable terms the result is due not to the Board of Agriculture, but to local effort. Unless more vigorous steps are taken it has become obvious that we shall be face to face with a shortage of potatoes in a year when they will be most wanted.

Another matter that has been allowed to drift into an equally unsatisfactory position is the provision of machinery for spring cultivation. It is true that some action has been taken at last. Men at various engineering works are being given technical instruction in regard to tractors, so that when they come to drive they will be able to do the running repairs. Others are being taught to drive. At last tractors are being actually manufactured, but it is impossible that the supply can keep up to the demand. In the result, those who are determined to have tractors at all costs have to lay out their money on American machines, which are ill suited for agriculture in this country. A Machinery Committee, consisting of representatives of the great agricultural firms, has been formed, and another committee consisting mainly of permanent officials of the Board of Agriculture has also come into existence; but whether they will be able to get the ploughing done in that energetic manner which was urged before Christmas there is no knowing.

It would be idle to deny that public opinion has fastened on the permanent officials of the Board of Agriculture as being responsible for this disastrous failure to meet the crisis. Personally and individually these men are not unpopular, but permanent officials are apt to envelop themselves in an atmosphere prejudicial to efficiency. They work together and are insensible to what is outside their circle. No better illustration of this could be found than the slowness with which they perceived that reclamation was an essential part of agricultural policy. It has been said *ad nauseam* that it would be impossible to bring the waste into bearing in time to be of any use in the exigencies created by the war. They never made any thorough enquiry into the subject at all. When a commission sat on the formation of settlement for soldiers, the witnesses called apparently were chosen by permanent officials and were only those who have appeared time and again for the same purpose. They did not seek information through any of the new avenues open to them, and apparently not one of them conceived it possible that land which was not only waste, but described by a most competent authority as "very bad waste" in 1914, should be made to yield on profitable terms a food supply in 1915 and a great return in 1916. Yet it was open to anyone to have worked out this conclusion. But it was out of the beaten track and therefore treated to the usual cold-water douche. Now, if the Board is to be of real service to the country, it must obviously be manned by people who have an open eye for every kind of progress and who also will probe and investigate a new idea till they thoroughly understand it. We say this reluctantly; and still more reluctantly are we compelled to add that Mr. Prothero has effected no visible change in the procrastinating and indecisive methods which have become associated with Whitehall.

Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece is a portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Geoffrey Hope Morley, who is a daughter of Lord Bughclere, and her little daughter.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.

COUNTRY



NOTES

ALREADY the success of the great loan is assured, and that fact is in large measure due to the impressive speech in which Mr. Lloyd George sent it off. It was exactly such an occasion as serves best to inspire the Prime Minister. Some of his phrases should be printed in gold, such as that "Extravagance costs blood, the blood of heroes." Here in seven words is a sermon that could not have been more effectively preached by an hour of sustained eloquence. The answer to the appeal has already been on a large scale. Yet there are many citizens of this Empire possessed of means to do it who have never taken part in any of the loans. Those who are organising for the purpose of making this loan as large as possible should see to it that there is no one escapes being faced with the duty that lies upon each of us in his or her degree to provide funds for the tragic adventure on which we have been forced to embark. It is the last lap that tests the runner most, and everybody should recognise that it is by his or her individual effort that the country will rise and exert itself as never before for that final rally which will be needed to put the enemy down.

IF politics were like a game of chess, a thumbnail sketch of the young Austrian Emperor which appears in our Correspondence columns this week might give the Entente Powers a hint as to the weakest point in the adversary's game. There can be little doubt but that this strong-willed and self-confident young sportsman is not going to be as plastic in the hands of the Kaiser as was the aged Emperor Francis Joseph. A little of Mr. Asquith's Wait and See policy would be useful here. Not by any means that our military forces should wait. After the recent disclosure of weakness they should press on with might and main, but for diplomacy silence is golden. The Entente Powers will only prolong the war if they force the Austrian Emperor willy-nilly to remain in the closest alliance with Germany. *Divide et impera* remains as sound an adage to-day as it was when the Roman legions were at their highest point of glory.

LONDON and Great Britain as well as Russia and the other Allies have suffered a great loss by the death of Count Benckendorff. The Russian Ambassador was among the first to recognise the possibility of the understanding between Russia, France and Great Britain, which was to ripen into a great alliance and, finally, to include Italy. He was a far-seeing statesman, but also a polished and urbane diplomatist, one dowered by Nature with tact to match his shrewdness. No one else occupied exactly the same place in London society as he and the Countess did. His death will cause a feeling of regret in a wide circle of friends.

WHO is responsible for fixing the price of next year's crop of potatoes, Lord Devonport as Food Controller or Mr. Prothero as his technical adviser? The latter, one would have expected to have known better. The cost of producing potatoes varies very largely according to the district and the methods of the cultivator. Mr. William Dennis, head of the famous firm bearing his name, reckoned before the war on spending £15 an acre, and he manures on what is considered a liberal scale. For this outlay he expects a return of about 10 tons to the acre. The average

farmer who does not make a speciality of growing potatoes would consider this expense unjustifiable. It would probably cost him from £8 to £10 for cultivation, and he would regard 6 tons as an adequate return. On the other hand, a correspondent writing to the *Times*, Mr. J. W. Pickering, works out a net cost of £35 3s. to the acre. But if he is a typical man of Kent, then in that county they pay highly for cultivation of the land. His seed is at the highest price. He lays on 20 tons of dung and supplements that with 4cwt. of bone and meat meal, 4cwt. of basic slag, and 1cwt. of sulphate of ammonia. For twice ploughing he pays £2 10s., which is, by a simple piece of arithmetic, 25s. for once. It is a pity that a good case should be spoiled by so extravagant a statement.

THOSE who have spent much less than Mr. Pickering evidently does on growing potatoes are nevertheless aware that it is not by any means certain that with all the care in the world they will ensure a profit when the price is £5 15s. a ton for produce of the first quality delivered in sound marketable condition up to the 31st of January. Over Scotland this year a well informed correspondent says that 2 tons was about the average return. Potatoes by the average grower have always been regarded as a risky crop. If they come out well they return a good profit; but they are expensive to grow, and loss very often occurs, at any rate on farms which are not managed by potato specialists. The consequence of fixing this price of £5 15s. a ton for the potatoes to be grown in 1917, therefore, is likely to have the effect of discouraging cultivation on a large scale, instead of helping it. Lord Devonport would not realise, though Mr. Prothero could not help doing so, that farming at the best always partakes of something in the nature of a gamble. Results cannot be ensured with the exactitude which a manufacturer of boots or umbrellas guarantees. Therefore, if the farmer is called upon to make a great effort in the way of planting potatoes, the terms offered should be so liberal as to take account of the risk he runs.

A SONG FOR TITANIA.

Creep nearer,
O little Elves! what though you see the Spring
By green ambassadors delivering
Promise of hyacinths, you are a-cold,
O little Elves! Creep nearer.
—For all the snow-cap stories are not told.
A Queen of two great Poles died yesterday;
These are her mourners' tears
You feel—And shake your furry ears
For piteous cold. . . . Aye, down the Water-way
Blue icebergs float to-day.

I will be telling you
Of silver carpets, spiders, prancing boughs,
Black ladders to the moon, and "I'll catch you"
Played over fields of corn; but leave the cows
In peace, when Spring is here,
And tie no tinkling blue-bell to each horn!

MARY-ADAIR MACDONALD.

IN our Notes and Comments on Food Production will be found the weightiest and most sensible utterance that has yet been made in regard to the handling of the agricultural question. Our correspondent points out that mischief and confusion have been caused by the practice of dealing with different branches of the subject in detail. One morning the farmer found himself requested by the President of the Board of Agriculture to grow potatoes, and afterwards, when he had made arrangements for manure, seed and the rest of it, he discovers that the price fixed would not be remunerative in any except the districts specially suited to potato growing. The growers in the Southern Counties, at any rate, would be risking their capital and complete failure. So with wheat. To issue directions about growing them piecemeal is only to perplex and discourage farmers. The same remark applies in principle to labour. A new alarm has been caused by the announcement that more efficient men are to be taken from the farms and that their substitutes are to come from Class C3, nearly all of whom are indoor workers, inexperienced and useless on the land.

THE alternative proposed by our correspondent has only to be put into words to convince everyone that it is right. It is that Mr. Prothero should work out a complete scheme of agricultural organisation and stand or fall by it. After all, our correspondent is right in saying that it is the

primary business of the Board of Agriculture to attend to agriculture. It is not the business of the Food Controller or of anybody else, and if Mr. Prothero finds that the machinery of the Board is not efficient, if he cannot get his scheme carried out by the permanent officials, then he must make drastic changes inside. The only way in circumstances such as we are placed in at present is to mark a bold line through them and follow it in spite of all obstacles.

NOTHING is more remarkable in the account which we give on the wheat return at Methwold this year than the difference between the manure bill on this reclaimed land and the manure bill on the typical English farm. Those who are reckoned to be the most scientific agriculturists in England value their manure, farmyard and artificial together, at about a third of the cost of that used by Dr. Edwards. Practically speaking, that is the difference between the farming in Holland and Belgium and farming in this country. In the former two countries economy is studied to a degree unknown here. Thrift is almost the greatest of all the virtues there, while a free and open hand is looked upon as a merit in this country. Yet it would appear that the thriftier a farmer is the more he lays out on artificial manures, which, of course, means that he calculates on obtaining a very much larger return for his money, and his calculation very seldom goes wrong.

ONE of the most ticklish points that has arisen in regard to reclamation comes from the destruction due to vermin and game. In the latter category practically the only offender is the pheasant. Ground game are kept out by wire netting. Partridges do no harm to speak of and may very well be numbered among the friends of the farmer. But there is no denying that at certain seasons of the year, sowing and harvest to wit, the pheasants help themselves to a very considerable share of the produce, though they are not so bad in this respect as woodpigeons. Some people think that these latter have been driven over here by the fighting on the Continent. Whether this be the case or not, they are here in very large numbers and, as a correspondent showed in last week's issue, it is difficult to shoot them unless one has entrance to the game coverts where they roost; for of all methods of reducing the flocks of woodpigeons, the best, in our opinion, is that of shooting them as they come home to roost at night—all the better if it be a windy night. On the reclamation it costs nearly twice as much to keep down the vermin as it costs for the after-cultivation of the wheat, that is to say, the cultivation after the seeding operations have been completed.

LORD DEVONPORT'S Feeding of Game Order strikes a heavy blow at the pheasant, as if the birds are not fed they will wander afield and eat the seed corn. As far as the rearing of pheasants is concerned, the measure is not to be regretted. The country as a whole cannot afford the loss of labour entailed by the rearing of pheasants, and at any rate the shooting of birds for the mere purpose of trying to make a record bag is a form of sport that will probably wane in popularity henceforth. There is very much to be said for the older fashion of walking up the game and being content with more genuine sport and much smaller bags. In the opinion of many who do not consider themselves old fashioned, a sportsman should be limited to the use of one which recreation passes into the range of extravagance.

THERE is still a very considerable number of natural forces which man has hitherto failed, or comparatively failed, to harness. The heat of the sun in the desert is to some extent being used; but the problem of controlling the immense energy of the tides has not yet successfully been solved. A very curious and successful experiment has recently been expounded in a November number of *Engineering* by Professor Luigi Luiggi, the well known Government engineer at Rome. Coal in Italy has reached the amazing figure of £8 or £9 per ton at the harbour and £9 to £10 in the inland towns. Italy is a land studded with volcanoes and, as long ago as 1903, Prince Ginori-Conti endeavoured to utilise the power of certain volcanic jets of steam which spout into the air near the Etruscan village of Volterra. He succeeded in a modest way in running with this form of energy a rotary motor and, later, a reciprocating steam engine connected with a dynamo.

HE gradually extended his plans and drove holes into the ground lined with iron pipes which reached 300ft. to 500ft. below the surface. These bore-holes vary in diameter from

12in. to 20in. and give forth steam with a pressure up to three and, occasionally, up to five atmospheres, at temperatures of 150° Centigrade to 190° Centigrade. For several years these jets have not diminished in their capacity in any way, nor does a new boring interfere with the supply, provided it be at a certain distance from any of the older ones. The power obtained was practically from 1,000 to 2,000 theoretical horse power per hour, but the mixture of sulphuretted hydrogen and traces of sulphuric acid and borax salts had a corrosive effect on the iron of the engines, and for a time this was not overcome. Now, however, the superheated steam is applied, not directly to the engine, but to boilers which in turn drive 300 horse power steam turbines, which are connected with a tri-phase electric generator. Since the war began and coal has become so incredibly dear, Prince Ginori-Conti has greatly developed this method of obtaining power. The tri-phase electric current is now generated at 4,500 volts and is raised to 36,000 volts through an oil transformer, and it now supplies power and light for areas as widely distant as Florence, Leghorn, Volterra, Grosseto, and many other small Tuscan towns. This harnessing of volcanic heat to an electric power-house will probably be largely developed in the near future.

ASHES.

I came and called you!—
Over the old grey wall that skirts the bay
Whose restless waves lip-lap the long, long day
There in your tide-left boat were you
With your short clay pipe, your sun-tanned face and your dear
old smile
I came and called, "Why, Dearie, it's nearly two,
And I've been waiting dinner for you, oh so long a while."

I came and called!
When life was an ashen thing.
And there was the bay, with its gulls and lip-lapping tide;
Your boat was there, and your nets and lobster pots and gear
And the much-tarred shed with its myriad things inside.
Then, far, far up in the hills I heard a wee bird sing
His evensong to his mate in the sheltering ling
And I cursed his joyous notes aloud—and cried,
For they do not know that you have died—
Those birds that sing at even-tide.

A. E. WHITING-BAKER.

AS a large thing may come out of a little thing, it is possible that the Parish War Society as described in Mr. William R. Boelter's little book may effect a considerable alteration in rustic economy. It would not only help countrypeople to work in the most effective way open for them to forward the winning of the war, but it would confer lasting benefits on those who have small holdings. Very few of the latter know, for instance, how to buy fertilisers for their land, and feeding materials for such little stock as they have—rabbits, pigeons, poultry, pigs—on the best terms. This can only be done when a number of little buyers combine into a considerable body. Let anyone compare the retail price of nitrates, for example, with the price quoted by the big dealers for quantities of over a ton and he will see that he who uses artificials on a small scale pays often four or five times as much as the large farmer pays for the same product. This is equally the case with the meal and grain required for animals, and the flour, bread, peas, beans and lentils needed in families. These things can only be had at the lowest price when bought in quantity. It is pretty certain that if country people began this practice under the pressure of war they would continue it in the days of peace.

IN the *Pall Mall Gazette* of January 15th there is a really clever cartoon. A jolly-looking man in a smock with spats above his heavy boots and an eye-glass is ploughing the soil in Richmond Park, while one or two stags are peeping coyly round the boles of trees as though wondering what was happening. Beneath is the legend "The Mond s'amuse; or, Who said there was a shortage of Agricultural Labour?" It is a very gentle but nevertheless effective piece of ridicule directed to a laughter-provoking scheme. In serious earnest Sir Alfred Mond is only playing to the gallery. He had an expert from Rothamsted to re-ort on Richmond Park, and found that in all its 2,000 acres only 100 acres were suitable for growing corn, and that it is not very suitable may safely be assumed. How many hundreds of acres of good land are remaining unsown for want of the labour and machinery which must be employed in this silly enterprise?

RECLAIMING A NORFOLK HEATH

A SPLENDID WHEAT RETURN.

I HAVE just heard from Dr. Edwards that the last of his wheat is threshed and sold. Readers will not have forgotten the notes that appeared about this crop in 1916 and will be interested to hear that the return justifies the view expressed last summer that it was a "clinking" one. Twenty acres were sown, the yield was forty-four bushels to the acre, the price obtained for the good wheat was £402 4s.; the straw and tail wheat are not yet sold. If these statements are carefully considered they should illumine the minds of those who sat on the Commission that made a very inadequate inquiry into the subject of reclamation as it affects the after-war settlement of those now fighting at sea or on the field. Before going into details let us see what they expected to happen.

A GOOD AVERAGE OPINION.

Mr. Trustam Eve is justly considered an agriculturist much above the average in skill and intelligence. His opinions carry authority, and probably many agree with a deliverance of his recorded on page 121, par. 2,619 of the Minutes of Evidence. "I think there are certain spots, that *with a large capital* [the italics are mine] should be reclaimed now, but it is no good putting men on land that has been reclaimed until it is practically made. It would ruin them to put them on at once." My reason for quoting this is to show that the speaker had given the subject no real attention and he represents the class of farmer to which he belongs, the class of substantial, capable men who are nevertheless slow to grasp new ideas. One of their governing principles is that such and such land is suitable for growing certain crops. The governing idea of the scientific reclamer is that if there is soil at all he will make it suitable for his purpose; he dictates to the land instead of allowing the land to dictate to him.

THE SOIL AT METHWOLD.

In COUNTRY LIFE of September 9th, 1916, Dr. Russell, who is second to no one in Europe as an authority on soils, thus describes that at Methwold: "At the outset I should say that the soil is the lightest I know of anywhere under cultivation. I have examined a good many soils at one time or another, but I have not met with one containing less of the finer particles that chemists and agriculturists alike have always recognised as being desirable for safe farming. *In every case where I have met similar soils they have invariably been waste.*" [The italics are mine.] When war broke out this particular patch was not broken up. It was part of that wilderness of bracken and other weeds against the waste of which Arthur Young protested in his day and generation. Dr. Edwards in a letter to me says, "This crop (of wheat), as you know, was after peas in the main three to four acres and after a good crop of potatoes—in each case the first crop after breaking up in 1914."

A COMPARISON OF RESULTS.

Last year was a bad wheat year. Figures are not available for the whole county, but it is very unlikely that the average yield per acre will come out at much over twenty-four bushels an acre. On the best lands and under the most skilful management the return seems to be at or about thirty-two bushels an acre. That was the return on a farm "particularly suited to wheat." This is the description given by the Board of Agriculture which sent me the figures. At Rothamsted threshing was not finished when the figures were forwarded, but the return is unlikely to be as good as last year when it was 34.2 bushels to the acre. Compared with these a return of 44 bushels to the acre is prodigious.

THE EXPENSE OF PRODUCTION.

It is the most difficult thing in the world to arrive at the exact cost of producing wheat. Even so precise and particular a man as the President of the Board of Agriculture has to confess in his evidence, "I have often tried, but I admit I cannot make it out to a penny or even a shilling." Nevertheless, I will try to lay the spectre of excessive cost which haunts the minds of Mr. Trustam Eve and his like. First, then, in Dr. Russell's letter already quoted from, which was written just after a visit to Methwold, it is stated "Dr. Edwards' method is much simpler. It does not require much working capital." Parenthetically it may be useful to state that Dr. Edwards

went to Belgium to study his methods, and learned these in the once famous University of Louvain. I have before me as I write accounts from some of the best farmed land in Great Britain. Most of them are necessarily incomplete. In some instances the grain is not threshed, in others it is not sold. They enable one, however, to get within a shilling or so (say, as near as Mr. Prothero's accounts bring him) to the cost of production; 38s. 6d. to 40s. at the present moment (1916) were the figures given by the President of the Board of Agriculture. At four quarters to the acre, that works out at a cost per acre of from £7 14s. to £8. But the expenses were increasing when this was said, and the actual cost on well farmed land, as far as I can make it out, ranged last year from £8 10s. to £9. The corresponding expense on the reclamation was probably in or about the same increase.

RELATIVE COSTS.

Looking over the items of expense on a typical English farm it is easy to show where the heavier expense is incurred, as thus:

- (a) Rent, tithe rates, fire insurance—the rent is only 5s. an acre, including the right to kill game, and the other charges smaller in proportion on the reclamation as compared with from 30s. to 40s. on farm land.
- (b) Labour comes out cheaper on the reclamation. It is scratch labour. Dr. Edwards, on principle, never refuses a job to anyone who seeks work in good faith, and the extreme lightness of the land makes the cultivation easier than on the clay.
- (c) Seed shows a saving because only 32 bushels were used to sow 20 acres. It cost 11s. 4d. per acre. In the farm accounts before me the cost of seed varies between 17s. and 36s. 6d. per acre. These figures all relate to 1916.

On the other hand, the item of manures is very expensive on the reclamation. The bill came to £59 15s. 10d., or at the rate of practically £3 an acre, whereas it cost only from 20s. to 30s. on the wheat farms. But dear as were the artificials the end justified the means. The actual manures used, with their cost, were as follows:

		£	s.	d.
February.	10cwt. of muriate of potash	28	5	10
	15cwt. of bone flour	5	5	0
April 20th.	20cwt. of sulphate of ammonia	17	10	0
May 20th.	10cwt. of sulphate of ammonia	8	15	0
Total		£59	15	10

This very liberal use of artificial manures is what the British farmer might advantageously learn from the thriftier Dutch and Belgians, who know that in this spending is great profit.

Dr. Edwards in the note giving me this information about wheat says the pea Harrison's Glory had just been threshed out, and shows a yield of 28 bushels to the acre, a crop that must surely prove even more remunerative than the wheat. In the stores list they are priced at 6½d. per packet containing about half a pint. Of the oats, potatoes, lucerne and other crops I hope to give particulars later.

The letter ends on a note of sadness. Dr. Edwards refers to the continued fertility of the similar land reclaimed in Suffolk as evidence that there was nothing in the argument of those who last summer tried to make out that this high cropping cannot be maintained. He adds: "Of the three lads I left there one is at Salonika, one in hospital, and one with his aged father holding on. Likely all three would have emigrated years ago but for breaking up the waste. It is too late now to do what was suggested years ago. 'No potash, no labour, no time to break up and clean.'"

A pity indeed! Is there no one with the determined enthusiasm needed to carry this through? The land of which this is a small sample lies about the neighbourhood in blocks. Think of the advantages had the matter been taken in hand when war broke out. From one estate alone 20,000 acres could be reclaimed. Anyone can see now how the food supply could be increased, the capital value of the land augmented at a time when the country sadly needs additional wealth, employment and food.

Here are the simple annals of the twenty acres:

- 1914. A bracken covered waste of bad soil.
- 1915. Profitable peas and profitable potatoes.
- 1916. Wheat: 44 bushels to the acre. Sold for £402 4s. P.

LAND RECLAMATION IN FRANCE

BY PROFESSOR SOUCHON, A MEMBER OF THE ACADEMIE D'AGRICULTURE.

NOT much remains to be done in France in the way of clearing land. For a very long time our soil has nearly everywhere been tilled, and the efforts of centuries have contributed to its increasing value. To find the period of the great land clearings in our country we must go back as far as the thirteenth century, which was the century of economic revival as undoubtedly as the sixteenth was that of artistic revival. It was then, through the action more especially of the great abbeys, that the waste lands and forests that occupied so large a part of Merovingian and Carolingian France were transformed into fields, pasture land and vineyards. Nor was the change only in material affairs. It produced a profound revolution in the condition of human beings—it meant nothing less than the disappearance of serfdom. Readers of Voltaire may imagine, on his evidence, that serfdom continued in France till the time of the French Revolution. This is a mistake. The thirteenth century, as a matter of fact, was the century of emancipation as truly as it was that of land clearing. And, more, the emancipation was a consequence of the clearing of the land, for the new improvements gave a very special value to agricultural labour, and to bestow liberty upon the labourers was an excellent way of attracting them to a particular district. In spite of the feudal dues an entire class of peasant owners grew up as the result of these enterprises, and millions of small proprietors completed the work of the thirteenth century. Their love of the soil was more fruitful than any effort of agrarian politics, and by the eve of the Revolution they had created the minute partitioning of the land in France which so much surprised Arthur Young, though he failed to understand its productive power.

Nevertheless, there was still much to be accomplished in the matter of clearing the land, and in our own day much has been done. There are some general figures on this subject which should be remembered. I have taken them from the exhaustive information published every ten years by our Ministry of Agriculture, between 1862 and 1892. In 1862 the uncultivated land (commons, marshes and moors) amounted to 6,579,983 hectares, the total extent of agricultural country being about fifty million hectares. In 1882 the portion of untitled land only amounted to 6,252,537 hectares, and by 1892 it had decreased to 5,226,189 hectares. The changes are not very great, but it is interesting to note that during thirty years at the close of the nineteenth century the unproductive portion of our soil was reduced by more than 20 per cent. This result is due to enterprise that might be carried out in every part of France. But in some districts the clearing of the land was of very special importance, and it will be well to mention, with a few details, what took place in the waste lands of the south-west, in Brittany, and finally in Sologne.

Let us speak first of Gascony. There is there a vast triangular plateau bounded by the ocean, the Garonne, the Midouge, and the Adour. It is bordered by the sea for a distance of about 200 kilometres, between the bay of Arcachon and the immediate neighbourhood of Bayonne; and it runs inland in a point, which extends to about 100 kilometres from the coast. The soil here is composed of fine sand, without a trace of clay or chalk, to an average depth of forty to fifty centimetres. This bed of sand lies on a substratum which bears the local name of *alios*, and consists of sand bound together by vegetable substances into a sort of cement. The *alios* prevents water from penetrating the soil to any great depth. Before the draining enterprises were undertaken no water could run away even superficially, on account of the level nature of the country. The result was the very unpleasant alternations of drought and inundation. In summer there was no water, for lack of springs. In winter there was a series of stagnant and poisonous pools, until the spring weather produced evaporation. The whole plain therefore was a desert. It remained so until the middle of the nineteenth century. But immediately after 1848 some important works, consisting of canals in the direction of the valleys of the Adour and Gironde, showed the possibility of drainage. One half of the plain, however,—about 300,000 hectares—belonged to poor communes. How was it possible to persuade proprietors of this order to undertake improvements? This was the aim of a law dated June 19th, 1857, framed especially for the region known as the Landes de Gascogne. This law enjoined upon the communes in

question to drain the land and plant it at once with coast-growing pines, and they were authorised to sell a portion of their property in order to procure the funds necessary for the work. The State further declared that, should any commune fail to comply, it would itself carry out the required improvements and would reimburse itself out of the profits of the woods it planted. Thanks to this law nearly the whole of these communal lands were drained and planted. Private individuals followed the example thus given them, and the country was transformed. The profits of the pineries are variable, and depend on the price of resin. But on the whole it is considered that the soil of the Landes de Gascogne is five times as valuable as it was in 1860.

Let us next consider Brittany, and especially South Brittany, where the Landes have been made famous by a whole literature. About thirty years ago the proportion of waste land and untitled ground in Finistère was over 220,000 hectares in 637,000; in l'Ille-et-Vilaine 151,000 hectares in 760,000; and in Morbihan 244,000 in 654,000. It may be thought at first sight that the reclaiming of a country like Brittany could be and ought to be particularly rapid. It is in truth an over-populated region. To be more accurate, it was until quite recently an over-populated region. But no part of France has suffered so much from the war. Brittany is a cradle of heroes. Our country has demanded immense sacrifices from it and its blood has been shed in torrents.

It is a rather remarkable fact that in spite of its over-population Brittany reclaims less land than one would expect. It is impossible to give exact figures, but an approximate conclusion may be reached. Judging from the official statistics, in a department such as Finistère during the second half of the nineteenth century, about a thousand hectares were won every year by reclamation. The gain is now a little more—1,500 hectares, perhaps—still much too small. Why is this so? In the first place, because the State has never made such energetic efforts here as in Gascony. Secondly, because the Bretons are much addicted to emigration. And, finally, because the rural economics of Brittany have to some extent been adapted to the land and can make some degree of profit from it. The gorse is used for litter in the place of straw. It is also employed as food for cattle, especially horses; and, indeed, sometimes it is even cultivated, so that it might be said that the land is improved in a way peculiar to itself, a way that consists, not in reclaiming the waste lands, but in exploiting them. None the less we must hope that the war of Brittany against unproductive land is destined to be pursued with greater ardour. The law might lend its aid. Under the Old Regime reclaimers of land were often helped by means of exemptions, and a royal decree of 1760 relieves them for twenty years from the *taille* and from tithes. There are also other means. There is a great deal of land in Brittany still subject to forms of joint tenancy which are not at all favourable to any kind of development, however slightly intensive. An effort has been made by special laws to put an end to a state of things so injurious to agricultural interests; and these laws are the true cause of the results that have been obtained, insufficient though they be. Unhappily, the war leaves no room for hope that the movement will gather strength. Our agriculture is bound to suffer too severely from lack of labour. It will only be by strenuous efforts that it will be able to maintain the position it has won; it must not count upon any advance for a long time to come.

One cannot deal with the question of reclaiming land in France without some reference to the agricultural history of Sologne in the nineteenth century. Sologne, which had gained a certain degree of prosperity by the sixteenth century, lost it entirely during the religious wars and the departure of the great landowners for the Court of Versailles. Prior to 1850 it was a vast desert, whose existence so close to Paris and amid the richest districts of France was truly extraordinary. There were but 100,000 inhabitants to 500,000 hectares of land in Sologne—barely a third of the usual population. These thinly scattered inhabitants lived poorly. It was an unhealthy country, with a prevalent intermittent fever known as "the Sologne sickness." The people's food consisted entirely of rye, buckwheat, and inferior cheese, and this want of nourishment combined with the effects of malaria weakened the population. The cause of these conditions was that the land was poor and ill cultivated. We

see from statistics drawn up in 1850 that of 460,000 hectares 130,000 were waste land, nearly 100,000 were woodland and water, and that only about 200,000 hectares, that is to say less than half of the entire soil, remained for cultivation. And even this was cultivated by a system of rotation of crops which entailed leaving ground fallow for considerable periods. This state of things seemed to be mainly due to the geological conditions of Sologne, where the soil was chiefly composed of sand and clay without chalk, with a sheet of stagnant water seldom more than two metres beneath the surface, to which it frequently rose. During the autumn and spring rains, therefore, the country was nothing but one vast marsh, without drainage.

For a long time, it seems, this situation was considered irremediable. But in 1850 there began in Sologne an economic revolution which forms, with the history of the Landes, the finest example of the reclamation of land in our country. The results obtained are due to the State, to the Association, and to private individuals.

Napoleon III had ties in Sologne. As soon as he attained to power his attention turned to this unfortunate country, and he gave orders that the necessary efforts should be made to give it health and prosperity. The first scheme was that a great canal should be made across the whole of Sologne, to ensure the draining of its waters into the Loire. Possibly this would have been the best plan. But the expenses would have been very considerable, and the State hesitated before so great an outlay. It was thought preferable to clear out and improve the natural river courses, which were clogged with weeds and boughs and impeded by a number of abandoned mills. In the course of twenty years, between 1850 and 1870, nearly a million francs were spent on this object. The Department of Bridges and Roads, too, greatly increased the number of roads in the agricultural districts, to the extent of about 600 kilometres. Moreover, during the last ten years especially, the system of departmental

tramways has been largely developed in this region, by way of compensation for the scarcity of railroads. Nor is this all that the State has done to advance agricultural enterprise. We have seen that there is a lack of chalk in Sologne. The Ministry of Agriculture bought some ground and made it into a public chalk quarry, arranging for the transport of the chalk under conditions particularly favourable to those concerned. The Association then came forward to support the public authorities. In 1859 a central committee was formed for Sologne, which was at first official and now constitutes an independent body. The Government has more than once accepted advice from this committee, to whom the facilities in the matter of the chalk pit were due. This committee has also helped to educate the landowners, more especially in urging the plantation of pineries, which form one of the most important elements in the present prosperity of Sologne.

The landowners have themselves made considerable efforts. This is largely on account of the sport that there is to be had in the country, which leads to their making their home there, and to many consequent advantages, both economic and social. It has been estimated that during the second half of the nineteenth century more than 100,000,000 francs were devoted by private enterprise to the reclaiming of land in Sologne.

Great results have been obtained. Whereas in so many rural districts in France the population has grown more and more sparse, it has rapidly increased in Sologne. Comfort and health have replaced the penury and sickness of former times. Of the 500,000 hectares of Sologne barely 20,000 hectares of waste land now exist. The soil that once was useless now yields very diverse products. The registers show that in some cases the value of the ground has increased tenfold. So here, too, we have a striking example of what can be done by a wise system of reclamation. Other countries may find it worthy of imitation.

NOTES AND COMMENTS ON FOOD PRODUCTION

THE FOOD OF PARTRIDGES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Lord Barnard's letter in your issue of January 6th and your editorial note attached to it are very much to the point. It has time and again been pointed out, even before Mr. Hammond's excellent work to which you refer, that almost all the corn eaten by partridges is picked up from the stubbles (and therefore lost for any better purpose); while examination of the crops of birds killed at various seasons has always demonstrated the amount of good they do by the consumption of the seeds of weeds (some of them among the most troublesome) and injurious insects. As only a single instance of the latter I may refer to a case mentioned in my "Birds of Northumberland and the Eastern Borders" (page 474), where the crop of a partridge examined in the summer of 1893 was found to be filled with the caterpillars of the grass moth (*Chareas graminis*). Many similar cases are on record or might be quoted. It seems a pity, as you say, that articles should be so carelessly issued from the Board of Agriculture that even the work done by its own earlier employés should be overlooked. With the other pests of the farm Lord Barnard has dealt so fully that I need only say I am in agreement with what he has written. Two of the worst are undoubtedly sparrows and woodpigeons, and each are almost equally difficult to deal with effectually. The pigeons have some little compensating qualities in that they devour a considerable quantity of weeds, and are also better human food than rabbits; but they are almost unattainable except by the use of the gun, and at present we have hardly any shooters left in the country. The great majority of the birds are, of course, reared abroad, and the destruction of the many thousands of them, as recorded by the East Lothian and other societies formed for the purpose, has very small effect upon their numbers. To deal at all effectually with them it would probably be necessary that they should be attacked in the countries of their origin during the breeding season, and that is, of course, out of the question, at least for the present. It is possible, however, that the destruction of woods due to the war may have some effect upon their numbers during the next few years.—GEORGE BOLAM.

DESTROY RATS FIRST.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I felt rather disappointed on reading the narrow views expressed in the Press on the proposed regulations in regard to game feeding. I look with some hope to COUNTRY LIFE, as our leading sporting paper, to take a more far-reaching view of the question. As a farmer of some fifteen hundred acres of land, I should be sorry, both from a shooting and a financial point, to see pheasant breeding reduced to such an extent that the industry would take years to recover. We are all agreed that in order to win the war, sport and everything else necessary must go by the board; but will the practical extermination of the game birds produce the result at which the Food Controller is aiming? In 1915 good pheasants could be bought in London at 2s. 6d. each; at the end of 1916, 12s. to 14s. a brace was asked for no better birds. I think this proves that without any Government regulation the stock in the country is being reduced to a proper war level. If, as various daily papers state, no rearing of pheasants is to be allowed this season, and old birds are not to be fed in the coverts, permission must be given for the wholesale destruction of game during the breeding season. Otherwise the pheasants will undoubtedly help themselves to the corn we are now being

urged to grow on grassland. Our carefully husbanded grain runs a still greater danger; it is feared that the present plague of rats will take a very heavy toll of the balance. Owing to the number of shooting properties unlet to-day, vermin have increased to an alarming extent. This is a direct contradiction to the statement appearing in some of our papers that the increase in the rat pest is the direct result of the quantity of grain fed to pheasants in covert. For although last season less corn was given to pheasants than at any period of the last ten years, the plague of rats on English farms is worse than it has ever been! If it is necessary that every grain of corn should be saved for bread, the Government should be urged to take steps, before our corn is grown, to destroy vermin.—K.

WANTED, A COMPLETE ORGANISATION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It is no use suggesting in speeches pieces of various schemes. It would be much wiser to formulate a complete scheme of agricultural reorganisation for war purposes and then to stand or fall by it. It is fatal to state the price of potatoes one day and the price of wheat another, and so on, because farmers have now become so alarmed that they will grow nothing at all until they know what the prices are to be. For example, many people started with the intention of growing potatoes in response to Mr. Prothero's speech, and having bought the seed at a big price, they are told by the Food Controller a few days afterwards that next September they can only obtain £5 15s. per ton for potatoes, which means that they are bound to have considerable loss. It has also stopped others growing potatoes at all, and although it is proposed to reduce the price of seed potatoes to a maximum of £12 per ton, even then in many districts it will not result in a profit at the selling price of £5 15s. Meantime everyone is undecided and nobody knows the definite policy of the Board. Mr. Prothero should not give expression to his ideas before they are formulated and a scheme is ready to be launched; and he is unlikely to be able to carry through any scheme satisfactorily unless he entrusts the executive powers to new men with business ability as well as agricultural knowledge. It is also fatal to suggest, as he has in one of his speeches, that those who wish to keep pigs should communicate with four or five different authorities.

It is unwise to endeavour to conciliate the various institutions and societies which exist in order to quieten them, as by so doing a muddle is made of everything. Mr. Prothero has the requisite knowledge and business experience, if only he would formulate a comprehensive scheme and entrust it to a properly constituted organisation to carry through. Then there will be some chance of success, but otherwise, parts of a scheme brought up in pieces and muddled through by the present officials will inevitably lead to failure.

Mr. Prothero has a great opportunity, because the public are prepared for any man to give a strong lead and stick to it, and he is missing this, the only opportunity there has been for many years of entirely resurrecting agriculture from the position into which it has fallen, mostly owing to the inactivity of past Presidents of the Board of Agriculture and their permanent officials.

So far as the production of food in this country is concerned, preferably the Board of Agriculture should control the situation, if necessary in consultation with the Food Controller; but the present arrangement under which the Food Controller controls the President of the Board of Agriculture, who only acts in an advisory capacity, is quite ridiculous.—X.

BLACK-HEADED GULLS

By M. G. S. BEST.



SUDDENLY ALARMED.

THERE is a very great fascination in watching the flocks of gulls on the Thames River during the foggy, grey days of winter. On every bridge, and all along the Embankment one sees people of every age and description feeding the birds, and watching with the greatest anxiety to see if one or other will really take from the hand itself the piece of bread held out to them, or whether the gull's courage will just fail it at the critical moment. These little gulls look all very much alike in their white winter plumage, though they really belong to two distinct species—the common gull, and the slightly smaller black-headed gull. They are not easy to distinguish unless they come near enough for one to see that some have grey legs and bill and the others red.

As the days begin to lengthen out towards the spring, the gull with the red bill and legs, shows dirty finger-marks on the sides of its head. These widen and lengthen until

the whole head has assumed its black, or rather, brown cap. Sometimes one notices a few of these black heads among a flock of birds as early as the end of February, but never very many together, as by the time their breeding plumage is complete the gulls feel it is time to be off to their nesting grounds.

The black-headed gull is no sea-going bird; he spends his summer on the shore or half-dry mud flats, and his spring at his nesting grounds, which are sometimes as much as forty miles inland. A few years ago I was fortunate enough to spend a Whitsuntide within half a mile of one of these big inland nurseries, and so was able to watch the birds from dawn till dusk. The gulls were nesting round the edges of some ponds lying in a hollow where the chain of woods ended and a wide expanse of moor began. The ponds were very shallow, beds of reeds encroaching for some distance from the banks. The gulls' nests were so thick



VERY ANGRY.

everywhere that it looked as if there had been a heavy fall of snow during the night. The birds were everywhere, some sitting among the reeds, some on the trees and bushes, while others were swimming in flocks about the ponds.

A long grass ride led down to the ponds from the road, soft and mossy underfoot so that one could approach quite noiselessly. But never without the gulls having due warning. Their system of defence was most complete—a quarter of a mile away a ring of sentinel birds was on outpost duty, always on the wing, and always at about the same place. A little further on were more birds, this time perched on high trees, and these sent messengers on to the ponds, so that by the time one had arrived, as quietly and cautiously as one might, the birds nesting near the edge were already on the wing, and those a little further from the land were only waiting to catch the first glimpse of you before they all rose from their nests into the air with one huge rush of wings. The air was absolutely thick with them, like a snow-storm of giant flakes, as they flew round and round, up and down, just one great whirl of birds.

But perhaps the most noticeable thing during this vast upheaval was the complete silence of the gulls themselves. For, except on an occasion such as this, they were never silent. From early morning to late at night, at a little distance away, one could always hear a curious sound like the undertow of the sea on a shingly beach, rising and falling in volume like the waves. On approaching the ponds this sound resolved itself into the shrill cries of the birds. On leaving their nests, for the moment one heard nothing but the beat of the wings, then, as



RETURNING AFTER A FLIGHT.



IN AN ATTITUDE OF DEFIANCE.



ON THE SAND DUNES.

the birds returned to their nests, the noise was deafening in its shrillness, and it was some little while before a comparative calm reigned again.

There was one small island lying by itself in a pool among the trees. This was covered so thickly with nests that one wondered how any bird ever found its own eggs. To a mere mortal they all looked so much alike. But there were furious battles between the birds in defence of their nests, and some of them got very badly wounded. One favourite mode of attack was to snap at the legs of the intruder as it hurried past, which might have accounted for so many gulls that were hopping about on one leg with the other broken.

One devoted pair had a nest on this island. While one bird was sitting, the other stood close at hand, and if any of their neighbours should venture to move there was an outcry at once, the standing bird scrambling over his mate in his hurry to attack the other, sometimes even delivering his blows while standing on his mate's back or head. She looked so proud of him after one of these sallies, and he certainly was an exceptionally devoted husband to possess.

For a distance of ten miles away from these nursery ponds the black-headed gulls could be seen searching in the ploughed fields for food, never very many together, but just a few wherever one looked. I have seen the returning birds in the early morning feeding those sitting on the nests, but never saw them doing this later in the day. They hatched off their broods in May, and by July were all off to some distant seashore or mud flat, leaving the ponds to the mallards and shelduck for the rest of the year. It is not every gull that can boast of ancestors who had nested in the same nursery for upwards of 300 years!

Another very charming colony of black-headed gulls had established themselves round about a Dutchman's duck decoy. Here they nested for the most part on the salt marshes among the avocets and terns, quarrelling indiscriminately with either neighbour. But the Dutchman was wise, and every day when the children returned from school, the party started off to collect the gulls' eggs, leaving wooden ones in their places.

It was necessary here to prevent the gulls increasing, as there were so many rare and valuable birds nesting on these marshes, and black-headed gulls are terrible robbers



AN INLAND NURSERY.

of other birds' eggs. There was a reed-bed inside the decoy itself which filled up the space behind two of the pipes leading into the central pond. This was an ideal place for the birds, and here they were left practically undisturbed. It was at one of these nests that I one day watched the absent gull return to feed its sitting mate with a tiny fish. Terns one often sees bringing fish, but I never saw a gull so gallant except on this one occasion.

Black-headed gulls do not always nest close to water. One large gully in the North of England lies among the sand-dunes of a large rabbit warren, though, to be sure, the sea bounds this tongue of land on one side, while the estuary of a big river lies on the other. The gulls were here in thousands, nesting in small colonies in every little valley among the dunes, and often spreading up the sides and over the top to the next valley.

I had never before been so thoroughly convinced what an unprincipled robber the black-headed gull can be as I was here. They systematically raided the common terns' nests; whenever the tern collected the few stalks of grass which was its apology for a nest, a gull kept an eye on it, and no sooner had the tern laid an egg there than the gull sidled up and ate it. It seemed so hopeless for the terns!

These gulls have a court of justice among themselves, though for which of his many sins the offending bird was arraigned before them I never could discover. The unfortunate prisoner at the bar had no chance, for after a very short discussion the whole "court" flew at him, each bird giving him a vicious dig with his bill just at the back of the head, so that, when one afterwards found the poor bedraggled body, the head was covered with tiny punctures from their bills.

THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE

By S. F. EDGE.

THE remark that "Mr. Prothero is infusing new life into the Board of Agriculture" and thus, I hope, indirectly into agriculture, is at least an encouraging sign. The agricultural movement of the future, if it is to be permanent and valuable to our country and our people, has a very long way to go yet, and has to convert vast numbers of urban voters to a great new agricultural policy, which has to include within it many industries whose prosperity and increase will be bound up with it. Now, the first step towards our permanent agricultural revival on sound lines is for our Government to decide: Is agriculture on ordinary farming lines a necessity to our country? Assuming after due investigation they find we must have a financially sound agriculture here, and for two reasons only I think this must in principle be agreed:

(1) In future we must be assured that this country can feed its people without imports of food. True, it may not be a very varied diet, but, at least, we must be able to live healthily on what we produce in the United Kingdom.

(2) Because a financially sound agriculture will provide hundreds of thousands of homes where fine, healthy people can be reared on good plain food, combined with fresh air and exercise, and thus provide a continuous supply of strong, healthy blooded people to our town populations, and provide our towns with outlets for those who fancy the land instead of the office, warehouse or factory.

Now, having agreed the need for this great country population living out of agriculture and its allied interests in country districts, the next thing is to set out ways and means by which it can be brought to pass. This is not easy, as we have to arrange terms between two apparently conflicting interests. On the one hand the town consumer of food, who naturally wants it as cheaply as possible, and the food producer, the farmer, who is judged as wanting to sell it for as much as possible. The way to bring these interests together is simple in principle but complex in working out, as the ramifications to bring the two parties together are so far-reaching. Now what are the first steps? As I see them they are:

(1) Government control, and possible purchase at the source, of all essential food produced here or abroad for import, while we are building up our ideal agricultural state.

(2) The purchase price in this country being based on the principle that a small margin of profit should be left for the producer year in and year out, good or bad seasons. Such security to the insurers of one line of national safety must be given if our land is to develop our maximum and necessary supplies.

I appreciate this will mean Government purchase and distribution of all essential foodstuffs such as corn, roots, meat, milk, etc. And why not? It will mean millions of sovereigns' worth of wasted labour saved, and release many men for productive work.

To give one instance—milk. The first big waste of time and loss in money is the method by which thousands of little farmers twice a day harness their horse and take their churns of milk to the nearest railway station or creamery, and thus add much useless cost in labour to the milk cost. Under Government control each farmer's milk would be called for by motor lorries, each with its allotted radius, and for a fraction of the present cost get the milk to the station. (This is already being done in some parts of the country by private enterprise.) When the milk reaches the town it is destined for it will go to municipal, Government or corporation depots, like gas or electric light companies, and be distributed in clear and definite streets and areas without overlapping: so unlike the present system, in which you see sometimes five milkmen and carts delivering milk in one short street, four-fifths of which is wasted labour, increasing the cost of the milk to the consumer without gain to the producer. Again, under this system a standard certified

milk would be produced with financial incentive and control on the producer to get his quality up to, and never below the agreed standard in purity and quality.

If milk users saw the poisonous places and conditions milk comes from and goes through in some instances, the thought of it would stop this great and valuable food from being used. Cleanse it and cheapen it from the producer to the user and thus cause vast quantities more to be used: a cheap and most valuable food to many who have never known what real milk is, but believe the legal whitish fluid sold in many places is a fair sample of milk. Milk is only one example of what is waiting to be done.

HOME GROWN WHEAT.

How many living now have ever tasted bread, wholemeal, made from wheat grown by themselves? Most of us have been reared on anæmic flour bleached by artificial means, and much of that which is *vital*, at least to the young, whose main food is bread, taken away. Prove this yourself by asking what is wanted to grow good bones, teeth and tissue, then ask for the analysis of white flour, and you will at once see that nearly all you want has been removed by the modern miller.

To realise what bleached flour was keeping from our people, try to rear some young pigs on white flour and they will die; but give them the other portion of the wheat and they will thrive mightily. It is almost a perfect food.

To come back to our wheat. The Government or municipalities must set up in districts where corn is grown mills to deal with local wheat within the necessary area, and by statute all wheat will be ground locally and distributed locally and only the excess sent elsewhere; or more brought in if local requirements are not satisfied.

When the railways belong to the State it will not be thought sound or good policy to grow food in Cornwall and take it to Edinburgh, or *vice versa*, if in each case it can be produced locally. Our railways will have better uses than simply ringing the changes with food that can be equally well produced in the users' own neighbourhood.

In addition to the local mills there will be dehydrating factories for surplus fruit and vegetables, so that all may use their gardens to their maximum productivity, and yet find a paying market from the Government factory, which will preserve them for winter use. There will be Government bacon and cold storage factories, where the pigs, meat and eggs produced most cheaply in the warm months may be turned into bacon or preserved for other seasons' consumption.

In pig products alone we can produce at home thirty million poundsworth a year, which at present is imported from abroad. This amount of money alone will go a long way to pay for the Government mills which produce the pig food and bacon factories for preserving it, to say nothing of the millions which will flow into our country districts in profit and wages.

In all ways this agricultural activity will react to the benefit of most essential trades and increase their size, scope and ability to employ more town people at good wages. A minimum wage of 30s. a week for the country worker and 25s. for the country women means a bigger and better outlook, which will react to the benefit of the local builders. New cottages, and villages even, must be built for the hundreds of thousands of new families who will come into the country. These new villages will not be built in the valleys and hollows of our land, where fog and damp are most prevalent; but every hilltop will have its new great war and peace village to ever remind the new generations how war brought sense and understanding to our people, and a realisation that living wages and profits to our producers from the land start the waves of prosperity at the bottom, which in ever-widening circles carry prosperity into every useful and necessary industry and occupation.



FROM the fifteenth century (and perhaps earlier) to the eighteenth the lands of Manderston belonged to the Homes. In 1479 Gavin Home of Manderston was charged with treason for holding the Castle of Dunbar against King James III, and Patrick Home fell at Flodden Field in 1513. Sir Alexander Home was called "of Manderston" in 1560. Some of his lands were held on a yearly rent of £4, payable to the monks of Coldingham. In earlier days the election of the Prior

of Coldingham was in the hands of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, but the Scottish sovereigns often interfered with this satisfactory piece of patronage. So it came that Queen Mary made Sir Alexander the "Commendator" of Coldingham in 1563. At that time he evidently found favour in the Queen's eyes, but he fought against her at Langside. In 1769 Alexander Home sold the estate to one Archibald Swinton, and thereafter Manderston passed through various hands, until in 1855 it belonged to Mr. Richard Miller of Leith, and after him to Sir William Miller, Bart. His eldest son, Sir James Miller, succeeded in 1890 and died in 1906. Since then it has been the home of his widow.

No record has survived of any castle having existed on the site, but the Homes must have had a residence on so large an estate. Some time in the eighteenth century there was built a modest house of no particular character, and this was remodelled by the late Sir James Miller so thoroughly that the Manderston of to-day is practically a new building. The plan of the new work, however, was dictated by the wish to preserve intact the south wall of the original house, which is of very beautiful grey sandstone. This determined the length and height of the main block, and incidentally restricted unduly the heights of some of the new and larger rooms. In every way the architect for the reconstruction, Mr. John Kinross, R.S.A., has shown an appreciation of the needs of a large country house. The servants' offices are grouped round a courtyard, which gives access to the luggage-room. From this a lift communicates with the bedroom floor.



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FROM HALL TO DINING-ROOM.

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THE DOMED HALL.

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FROM BALLROOM TO DRAWING-ROOM.

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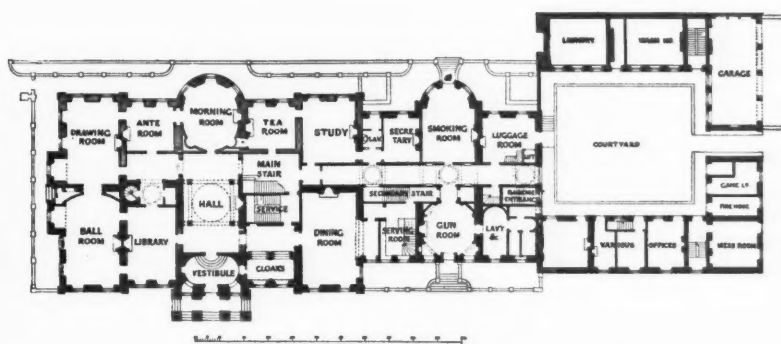
THE DINING-ROOM.

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the late Lord Scarsdale of Kedleston, and was brought up at Kedleston. There exists no more interesting example of the art of the Brothers Adam than what they did at that noble house. Mr. Kinross had to deal with a plan and with rooms of proportions very different from those at Kedleston, but his clients wished that not only should the decorative scheme follow the Kedleston tradition, but that the detail there should be reproduced in facsimile as far as might be practicable. The domed saloon in the Derbyshire prototype has its counterpart in the domed hall at Manderston, but it is only in such details as the fireplaces that the correspondence is absolutely complete. The dining-room at Kedleston has an apsidal end: the ball-room in the Berwickshire house lacks this feature, but reproduces the ceiling with its inset panels painted by Zucchi. These examples do not exhaust the similarities between the two houses, but serve to show how much Lady Miller's home owes to the house built for her forebears. Robert Adam was fond of relying upon foreign craftsmen to carry out the delicate detail which was one of his contributions (though not the most important) to the eighteenth century architecture of England. At Manderston the "stuc" decorations were executed by French workmen. A local material, however, Hopton Wood stone, relieved with inlays of light green marble, was used to pave the vestibule and hall. Notable, too, among the many beautiful objects which adorn the house is a collection of ornaments of "Blue John," perhaps the most beautiful mineral product that the soil of England yields, or rather yielded, for the deposit is no longer worked. If the spirit of Robert Adam guided the hand of the architect in the stately reception rooms at Manderston, that influence was displaced elsewhere, for the grand staircase owes its character to the Petit Trianon. Outside the house Mr. Kinross was free to devise a garden setting which owed its



GROUND FLOOR PLAN.

Old walls shown hatched; new work in solid black.

Decorative amenities match practical merits of planning at Manderston. The Adam character given to the interior treatment has a basis in reason, because Lady Miller is a daughter of

form to the general traditions of Scottish formal gardening rather than to any specific example. The ground fell away somewhat from the south front, and this gave opportunity for the forming of a terrace decorated by fine stone vases, and below it a broad series of parterres disposed about a round pool and fountain. From the main terrace a handsome pair of stone piers, topped by heraldic beasts and framing an iron gate with a finely wrought "overthrow," stands at the head of a stone stairway leading down eastwards to a further range of gardens.

We have already (in COUNTRY LIFE of July 4th, 1914) illustrated the famous stables at Manderston which housed the carriage horses and hunters of the late Sir James Miller, one of the most successful judges of horses of our



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GARDEN STAIR TO MAIN TERRACE.

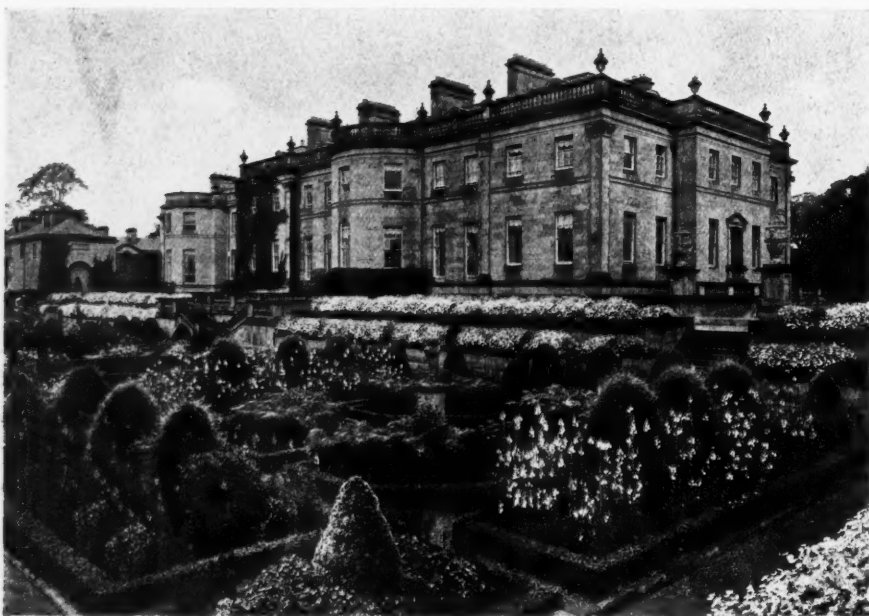
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ENTRANCE FRONT FROM NORTH-EAST.

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FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

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PARTERRES FROM NORTH-EAST.

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time. His racing stable was the Hamilton Stud Farm at Newmarket, and Mandeston was only occasionally the home of one or two horses of racing stock. Sir James' racing career is one of the fairy tales of the English Turf. Sainfoin won the Derby for him in 1890. Sainfoin's son, Rock Sand, was bred by Sir James, and won the Two Thousand Guineas, the Derby (in 1903), and the St. Leger, the triple crown of achievement in the world of racing. Of the two remaining classic races, the Oaks and the One Thousand Guineas, the former fell to La Sagesse in 1895 and the latter to Aida in 1901. Nor were the Miller colours less successful in the great handicaps. Pharisee won the City and Suburban in 1905, Invincible II the Ebor Handicap in 1898, and Chaleureux both the Cesarewitch and the Manchester November Handicap in 1898—truly an amazing record of success!

LAWRENCE WEAVER.

THE BUILDER'S ART OF YESTERDAY

The Development of British Building Construction, by C. F. Innocent.
(Cambridge University Press, 10s. 6d. net.)

OBSERVATION, scholarship and industry, all in a high degree, have gone to make a book more fascinating to read than its title suggests. Mr. Innocent has gone to the very roots of our traditions and examined such relics as remain of the least important home buildings. Examining these in the light of such documentary evidence as survives, he has sketched the growth of the cottage and the barn from their simplest beginnings. His photographs show that he has been in at the death of many a humble cottage, and as the hand of the destroyer has torn them limb from limb he has noted their little niceties of construction. The growth of "cruck" building, which preceded the most elementary form of post and truss, is shown very fully. It is the more worthy of study because it seems to be the one distinctively English solution of the problem of treating wall and roof as a single element in construction. The cottage at Scrivelsby, Lincolnshire, trivially called "Teapot Hall" and illustrated in *COUNTRY LIFE* on June 14th, 1913, is one of the best examples of this wattle and daub building and is fully discussed. The dauber or plasterer was originally the "deal-bator" or whitewasher, and so appears in the Westminster Abbey accounts of 1253 in the person of one Ade, who was "blanching" or whitewashing the Abbey for many weeks. Mr. Innocent makes a slip in describing the use of wattle, i.e., rough basket work, as centering for vault building when he says it was used in the crypt of the deanery at Kilkenny. It is in one of the basement chambers of Kilkenny Castle, and when the writer saw it a year ago the very neat wattle-work remained in perfect condition. Just now when the Minister of Munitions has almost stopped building it is worth noting that his sixteenth century predecessor, the "saltpetre-man," was also a scourge to builders. His business was to search for nitre wherewith to make gunpowder, and he had powers to take up earthen floors which, by reason of the filth absorbed into their porous surfaces,

yielded him considerable wealth of nitrous material. This was especially the case with stables and slaughterhouses, but he did not spare houses, and even took up a church floor in 1624. "The unwarranted depredations of saltpetre diggers" made it necessary to restore Ragdale Hall in 1633. The evolution of forms which we are apt to consider of aesthetic significance from the natural employment of simple materials is of especial interest; for example, diamond panes in leaded lights. Before glass was used, one of the methods of protecting a window opening from the weather was to make an open lattice of twigs. If these were interlaced diamond fashion the rain ran off more readily than if they formed square openings, and when leaded lights came in, this form was followed for the glass panes. We rather hoped to find that Mr. Innocent would have dug out some definite date for the introduction of the sliding sash window, but he only mentions 1688 as the year when "glasses for sash windows" were advertised. Lauderdale's mention of "the double chassee for the windows" in 1673 seems therefore to hold the field. The nomenclature of building is an alluring byway. Mr. Innocent gives the names in 1688 applied to different sizes

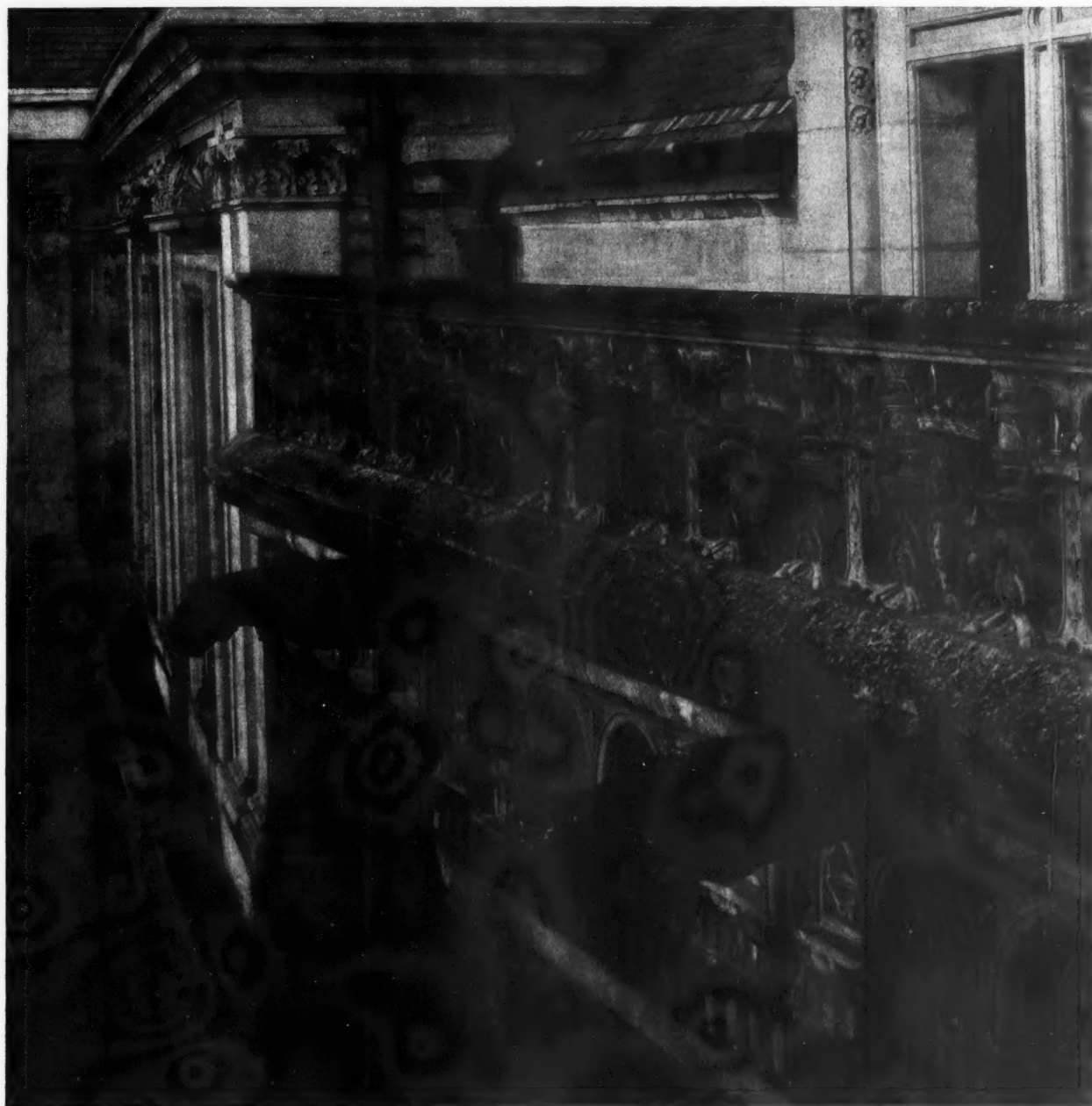
of slates, "Short Haghtee, Long Haghtee, Farwells, Chilts, Warnetts, Shorts, Shorts save one or Short so won, Short Backs, Long Backs, Batchlers, Wivetts, Short Twelves, Long Twelves, Jenny why Gettest thou, Rogue why Winkest thou." The list ends just as it is getting interesting. The present names, "Ladies, Countesses, Duchesses, etc.," are said to go back to 1750. For the old cock hinges Mr. Innocent gives the names of gemows, gimmers, gemmels and jimmers, all corruptions of the French *jumeaux* or twins. The Windsor Castle accounts furnish us with jamawes and gymeux. Our author is silent as to the derivation of cross garnets, another sort of hinge. The Windsor accounts give us gernettes in 1352 and garnettes in 1478. The simple latch lifted by pulling a string from outside is a sneck-band in Yorkshire and Lancashire, a snecket in Cumberland and a clicket in Shropshire. Windsor again helps with "clyket" in an account of 1368. Mr. Innocent has overlooked a jolly English word for louver. He gives "fumarium" for it, as a tunnel to clear smoke away, but Windsor Englished this into fumerell and femerell. Altogether an important contribution to the history of building and withal a most attractive book to read.

THE PALACES OF FRANCE

Twenty-five Great Houses of France, by Sir Theodore Andrea Cook; with an Introduction by W. H. Ward. (COUNTRY LIFE, 42s. net.)

MR. WARD'S introduction to this book is full of real learning simply and clearly expressed, and of excellent criticism which is not merely praise. Sir Theodore Cook writes in the main of the human history of these great houses. To him Valencay means Talleyrand, and Vaux le Vicomte, Fôuquet. But he never gossips

frivolously or like a mere bookmaker about these famous figures. He makes us feel that the palaces of France are haunted by ghosts, most of them tragic, and, as we look at the photographs with which the book is illustrated, we feel that there has been little happiness in all this splendour. As the guide book said about the Bay of Baiae, "Ruins point the usual moral." It is not, happily, ruins in this case, but it often is guilty splendour; and with



BLOIS: THE WESTERN CORNICE ON INNER FACADE OF FRANCIS I.

Sir Theodore they do point the usual moral, though he never presses it on us. There is, to begin with, the house of Jacques Cœur at Bourges, the chief Gothic dwelling-house of France. He lived in the time of the English wars, the most evil time in French history. Sir Theodore tells us the history of his life. He was one of the first modern men, a trader and of low birth, who saw the importance of commerce to the State. He also saw its importance to himself and built his famous house, which is a cottage by Chambord or Vaux le Vicomte, but which must have aroused envy enough in his own day of poverty. He lent money to everyone who was likely to pay it back, including the King. He was the rival and enemy of the Medicis. At last he had too many enemies and was accused of poisoning Agnes Sorel, not because he was likely to have done it, but because it was an ugly charge. The accusation was only the proof that his enemies had got the better of him. He was also accused of many other things, to which he confessed; but that does not mean that he had done them. Of course, he lost all his property, but he escaped to Rome, to the Pope who was his friend. Soon afterwards he died. He was more fortunate than his great successor Fouquet, who lived a prisoner long after his disgrace, of which Sir Theodore Cook tells the story almost as vividly as

French were still Gothic even at the height of their Renaissance. In the Gothic they had expressed their passion for carrying an idea as far as it could be carried, as passionately as they expressed it in the Revolution. To the French, architecture was always material at the mercy of an idea. They would prove that they could do with stone what they would. The Italian has always thought of the material in the design: his pride and excess have been in the hugeness of his blocks of masonry; but the Frenchman likes to triumph over the material with his design, to use stone as if it were not blocks at all, but some substance that could be moulded and twisted into any shape. This taste of his reaches its height in Flamboyant Gothic, but it lasted into the Renaissance, and in the great Renaissance châteaux it is still strong. They seem to struggle fiercely to break their bonds and be Gothic again. It is an age of reason, perhaps, but of reason trying to argue itself to the most fantastic conclusions. Piranesi only drew his caprices: he did not try to build them; but the French actually built caprices almost as tremendous. Sir Theodore Cook says, for instance, of Chambord that it is a fantastic dream rather than an orderly design; that it might be the home of Gargantua. One could not say this of any Italian palace. The utmost extravagances of the



BLOIS: THE SALAMANDER OF FRANCIS I.

Dumas and more truly. Dumas sympathised with Fouquet, no doubt because of his magnificence, but he built Vaux le Vicomte out of sheer plunder. He was merely a beast of prey, feeding upon France; and he only got his deserts.

One cannot but remember that most of these great houses were built out of plunder; and yet when one looks at Mr. Frederick Evans' magnificent photographs one forgets all that. For these photographs are the best I have ever seen of great buildings. Mr. Evans has a wonderful power of choosing the right point of view, and of making each building reveal its peculiar character. This he does as well with the whole mass as with details, and to look through the book is to be filled with the sense of the peculiar character of French building from Carcassonne to Vaux le Vicomte and Cheverny.

The French, with the Italians, have been the greatest palace builders of Europe. In both countries great families, new and old, have delighted to express their power and pride, their command of circumstance, in that art which expresses such things best. But there is a great difference in the expression, even when it seems to use the same style. To the Italians the Renaissance was their own natural style; they returned to it, rather than discovered it, from the foreign fantasies of the Gothic. But Gothic grew in France, and the

Baroque are extravagances of ornament rather than of form. But the extravagance of Chambord is in the form. Even so, it is not lawless, any more than Beauvais Cathedral is lawless. There is the same logical excess in both. The façades of Chambord are as regular as the apse of Beauvais; the exaggeration is in the roof, and it is an exaggeration of just the same kind as that which turned the roof of a Gothic tower into a spire. It is an elongation, not of one feature but of all, just as, in the Gothic, roofs and pinnacles and spires all lengthened themselves out upwards as if they were not stone but flames drawn up by a draught. But at Chambord there is a struggle with an alien style not suited to these effects; there is still a sense of weight which the Gothic had triumphed over. The roof is loaded rather than buoyant; one wonders that the earth does not cave in under the pressure of it all. There is, in fact, an incongruity which Sir Theodore Cook expresses by saying that the building under the roof looks like a toad beneath a flower-bed. One could not say that of Beauvais. There the religious passion gives unity to it all. At Chambord there is a mixture of artistic passion and mere desire for display.

But there is artistic passion, and these great houses are not vulgar, like the modern imitations of them. The artist



CHAMBORD: TWO CHIMNEYS FROM TERRACE.

was allowed to develop his own logic; he was not told to imitate a style as cheaply and noisily as he could. And so the French artist, thus given his freedom, reminds one again and again of the modern Cubist. He subjects building to his abstract logic as the Cubist subjects the visible world, and it was the pride of his employer to let him play with

solid stone on this huge scale as easily as if it were paper. It is, in fact, the architecture of the superman, and again and again the superman himself toppled over in the ruins of his own magnificence. There is an obvious moral; but we would rather enjoy these buildings, and these wonderful photographs of them, than draw it. A. CLUTTON-BROCK.

LITERATURE

A BOOK OF THE WEEK

Highways and Byways in Nottinghamshire, by J. B. Firth. (Macmillan.)

MR. FIRTH'S task has been performed in the best style of an accomplished writer. Complete familiarity with the scenery and local history of Nottinghamshire makes him a very delightful guide. There is something very solid about the glory of the Midlands. Romance in its highest aspect hovers over the extremity of the kingdom. Cornwall, at one end, with its mystic and beautiful Lyonesse, has its unsurpassable legends of Tristram, King Mark, Iseult of the white hands, and the

"Dear dead women with their hair too.
What's become of all the gold?"

In Northumberland, at the other limit of England, we hear the moss-trooper chanting his wild strain and the widow her lament, both speaking of the Border warfare out of which grew a literature of song as touching and fine as is to be found in the Greek anthology. But the charm of Nottinghamshire is not an emanation from these far-off unhappy things, but is best typified by the River Trent—the "charming quiet landscapes on the Trent," in George Eliot's phrase. Our historian probably would not accept that without a protest, for he contends that Sherwood Forest possesses "a two-fold glamour of a romantic past and the glamour of a living immemorial beauty." It would be foolish to dispute either contention. There is no romance which has taken a deeper hold on the imagination of Englishmen than that of Robin Hood and Friar Tuck, outlawed, living under the greenwood tree, eating the King's deer and drinking malvoisie from the leather jacks of their time, singing their wassail songs, dancing with pretty maidens, and lightening the purses of rich Jew, fat prior, and any Norman celebrity who had the ill-luck to fall into their hands. But all that highway robbery includes is part of the sterling good heart of the English Midlands, rather than of the wild poetry to which the English nature can rise at certain times and in certain places. Besides, it is impossible to deny that prosperity has taken away a certain romance from Sherwood Forest. Its trees and glades—what is left of them—are as beautiful as ever, but the district has come to be called the Dukeries, and imagination will not consort with that word. Nevertheless, the district has an absorbing interest of its own. There are very few families in England comparable with that of Portland, and the present Duke has obtained the position of a great leader solely on account of his natural disposition and his readiness to lead or to show an example wherever it is possible. Mr. Firth in a short preface explains why it was impossible for him to say anything about the war. The book was written before it began, and thus the part played by the Duke of Portland in this critical period of national history is passed in silence. Even if it were not so, Welbeck, Clumber, and Thoresby, seats respectively of the Duke of Portland, the Duke of Newcastle and Earl Manvers, are historically and architecturally well worth the attention given them. Worksop Manor, "a sweet, delectable place," as Evelyn said, is no longer part of the Dukeries, as it has passed out of the hands of the Duke of Newcastle into those of Sir John Robinson. The mention of Worksop naturally carries us back to the old days. A letter from Mary, Queen of Scots, tells that when she was under the harsh guardianship of Bess of Hardwick and her husband, she was "allowed to visit Shrewsbury's seat at Worksop." A few years later her son, James I, was royally entertained here as he made his famous progress southward to enter into the succession after Elizabeth's death. During the Civil Wars Charles often stole a little rest in the seclusion of Worksop. In 1756 it was visited by Horace Walpole, who left in a letter he wrote to a friend the following description of it:—

The house is huge and one of the magnificent works of old Bess of Hardwicke, who guarded the Queen of Scots here for some time in a wretched

little bed-chamber within her own lofty one; there is a tolerable little picture of Mary's needlework. The great apartment is vast and trist, the whole leanly furnished; the great gallery, of about 200ft., at the top of the house is divided into a library and into nothing. The chapel is decent. There is no prospect and the barren face of the country is richly furred with evergreen plantations under the directions of the late Lord Petre.

From contemporary accounts, it seems to have been very fine outside at this time. The seventeen hundred acres were beautifully planted and landscape gardenized. Dr. Pococke in describing the place hazards the suggestion that

the large parks in this country seem for the most part originally to be large commons enclosed, being a sandy poor soil, which naturally produces little but fern.

This is specially interesting at a time when it is being seriously urged that these parks should again be brought into cultivation. It shows that in regard to many of them the process would be one of reclamation pure and simple. Some day it would be interesting to show how various parks were formed. Some, no doubt, were commons, but others were certainly formed of small cultivated fields. One can trace where the fences and ditches have been and in some instances the position of the trees show that they were originally part of the dividing hedgerow.

Naturally, Mr. Firth has a great deal to say about Welbeck. He quotes from Sir John Reresby's description of the second Duke of Newcastle, who travelled like a great prince with three coaches and about forty attendants on horseback. Reresby describes a curious quarrel between the Duke of Newcastle at Welbeck and the Duchess, over the latter's wish to have her daughter, Margaret, betrothed to my Lord Shrewsbury. Horace Walpole gives a lively account of what he saw at Welbeck.

Oh portraits! I went to Welbeck. It is impossible to describe the bales of Cavendishes, Harleys, Holleses, Veres, and Ogles; every chamber is tapestried with them; nay, with ten thousand other fat morsels, all their histories inscribed, all their arms, crests, devices sculptured on chimneys of various English marbles in ancient forms (and, to say truth, most of them ugly).

To-day, it would take a book in which to describe the treasures of Welbeck. To many people, the most interesting memorial there is that erected by the present Duke of Portland to the memory of Lord George Bentinck. His death was tragical. He set out on foot from Welbeck Abbey on the afternoon of September 21st, 1848, to walk to Thoresby, at which he never arrived. His body was found late in the evening by a search party, and the coroner's jury that ultimately sat on it returned the verdict: "Died by the visitation of God, to wit, a spasm of the heart." Lord George Bentinck came to the front at a most critical moment in English politics, and Disraeli's biography of him is well entitled to the praise awarded him by Mr. Firth—"the best political biography in the English language." His character as a sportsman was equally worth attention. The story most illuminating about his character is that told of the man who owed him £4,000 and offered to pay half and the rest in instalments. Lord George turned on him with brutal candour. "You have no right," said he, "to bet if you cannot pay. I want £4,000; if you cannot pay, you are a defaulter." Lord Winchelsea summed him up in a couplet:

Straight to the point he went, abrupt and dry,
Tricks he called knavery and a lie a lie.

The following vivid description was given by a sporting writer:

Dressed in buckskin breeches—none of your Borway does or West Riding imitation, but in the hides of his own stage—with exquisitely made boots of the true orthodox length and antique colouring in top: a buff waistcoat of reddish brown, double breasted coat, ornamented with the buttons of the Jockey Club; a quiet beaver, placed neither at a right angle nor at a left, but in the *juste milieu* of gentlemanly taste, on a well-formed head of auburn hair with large whiskers of the same colour, a starting-flag in his hand and followed by eight and twenty racehorses, like a troop of old Franconi's bearing a tulip bed aloft—so brilliantly shone the silken jackets of the riders in the sun—the observed of a thousand eyes—such did

Lord George Bentinck appear as he undertook to start the immense field for the Great Yorkshire Handicap on a plan of his own invention.

The temptation about this book is to concentrate on a few interesting points on which it would be possible to fill many pages, and thus neglect the fact that nearly every page is equally full of matter. It begins with the town of Nottingham, which really deserves a volume all to itself, and goes on to describe, with the particularity of one who must have spent days and nights and years in his favourite county, the seats and villages of the neighbourhood. The descriptions are enriched with many a pleasant anecdote and story, not the least fascinating being those connected with Byron.

LITERARY NOTES

THE remarkable book by Dr. Bang, Theological Professor at the University of Copenhagen, "Hurrah and Hallelujah" (Hodder and Stoughton), is what the author calls a documentation of the New Spirit of New Germanism. He adopted the title from a volume of poems first issued in the early days of the war by a German pastor named Vorwerk. It came out at a time when Germany, intoxicated with the victories that preceded the Battle of the Marne, was eager to begin "The Tumult and the Shouting." As was to be expected, many hard things are said about England, but that should not prevent us from carefully studying the German spirit. In the intervals between hard fighting the war turns into a slanging match of the nations, but philosophic Englishmen will remember the nursery rhyme:

"Sticks and stones will break our bones,
But names can never hurt us."

TEUTONIC PROPHETS.

Dr. Bang carries us back to the sources of modern German inspiration, among which the chief is Emmanuel Geibel, whose centenary was kept last year, he having lived from 1815—1884. Two lines of his are everlastingly quoted and enlarged on in the literature of the war. They are:

"Und es mag am deutschen Wesen
Einmal noch die Welt genesen!"

Immediately after 1866 Geibel began to clamour for the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine. Yet when Bismarck unscrupulously doctored the cards that brought about the Franco-German War of 1870, his "stunt" or "wheeze" for the occasion reads as though lifted from a German paper to-day, so accurately has the patter of 1870 been reproduced to fit the circumstances of 1914. "Germany had set her mind upon building her house in peace, but then came her hereditary foe, puffed up with venom and envy. The blood so criminally shed shall be upon him and his brood. We do not dream of an easy victory; this war is a world judgment, and strong is the spirit of lies; but He Who was once the stronghold of our fathers, will again see us safely through it, be assured of that!"

In addition to Treitschke, Nietzsche and Bernhardi, there are several writers not so well known in England, but the main interest of the book lies in its quotations from the works written to-day. The writers are inflated with egotism and carried away with the belief that their country is unconquerable. Strange pranks some of them play in the first issue of "Hurrah and Hallelujah." There was a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer of which our author gives the following example:

"Though the warrior's bread be scanty, do Thou work daily death and tenfold woe unto the enemy. Forgive in merciful long-suffering each bullet and each blow which misses its mark! Lead us not into the temptation of letting our wrath be too tame in carrying out Thy divine judgment! Deliver us and our Ally from the infernal Enemy and his servants on earth. Thine is the kingdom, the German land; may we, by aid of Thy steel-clad hand, achieve the power and the glory."

It was taken out in later editions in response to protests against blasphemy, but a thousand passages are cited from all kinds of writers to show the belief that has spread in Germany that God Himself is a German. In very few instances has a protest been made against this annexation of the Almighty. The average German is thoroughly convinced of the German character of God and that Germany is the chosen people of that Deity. The notorious Hymn of Hate directed against England was religious in intention. A German religious paper of good standing justifies the hatred on these grounds: "England is now the scourge of God under which the whole world groans (!), which hinders commerce and trade, takes no heed of neutrality, and has conjured up this terrible war with the one object of crushing Germany; it is because of England that the best sons of our people are bleeding out their lives upon the battlefield, that death in a hundred shapes is stalking over the earth, that peaceful countries are given over to ruin and conflagration (!), that irreparable treasures of German Kultur are ravaged by Russian barbarians. It is England that has let loose the wild lust of conquest of heathen Asiatics against the people of the Reformation, and thereby placed European Christianity in danger of losing its most sacred possessions (!)." If the poet be thought to be extravagant, the reader can turn to the volumes of sermons preached during the war, and he will find the language in them as extreme as it was among the poets. The preachers are characteristically German, inasmuch as they can see good in no other nation save their own. As one writer puts it: "Germany is precisely—who would venture to deny it?—the representative of the highest morality, of the purest humanity, of the most chastened Christianity." Walter Lehmann, the Pastor of Hamberge in Holstein, thus explains why the enemies of Germany banded themselves against her: "Because Germany is too strong and mighty, too strong and flourishing, too pure and moral, too sound and unassailable, too industrious and aspiring, too deep and rich, too inwardly and spiritually fertile . . ."

He has his own way of stating that God is always on the side of Germany. "It is enough for us," he says, "to be a part of God."

Karl König, who published a book called "Six War Sermons," let out one or two rather ugly facts in the course of them. He says that the war began "two years too early for our enemies, but an act of grace from God for ourselves and our allies!"

After finishing with the clergymen Dr. Bang gives a series of excerpts from speeches by German professors. In it, some of the most eminent men at the University of Berlin tried their hand at encouraging and comforting their fellow men. These professors are not too judicious in tone, as witness what the philologist, U. von Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, says on Belgium:

"See what the war has laid bare in others! What have we learnt of the soul of Belgium? Has it not revealed itself as the soul of cowardice and assassination? They have no moral forces with them; therefore they resort to the torch and dagger."

Here the wolf is blaming the lamb with a vengeance, but the mingling of hate, blasphemy and passion in this volume must be read of itself to be credited. No human being with any impartiality whatever could believe that a whole country is so absolutely sure that everything done by Germany is right and everything done by her enemies wrong; that the God of Battles leads the host of the Kaiser, and the Devil those who are his adversaries.

Dr. Bang has earned our gratitude for getting together this unique collection of passages, which show, as in no other way possible, the heavy vindictive spirit of the modern Hun.

Nothing Matters, by Herbert Beerbohm Tree. (Cassell, 6s.)

IF one were summing up the characteristics of Sir Herbert Tree as an actor, he would doubtless have us put humour first, but humour would surely only follow versatility. "An actor," he says in his address "Humour in Tragedy" "should be able to play comedy or tragedy at will." And herein, although he has set out in praise of humour, he makes versatility a prime condition of his art. That gift no one will deny him. He swings from the ordered pomposities of d'Orsay to the stormy adventures of Ulysses, from the tragic ignobleness of Caliban to the tragic nobility of Colonel Newcome, from the heart-breaking shame of Richard to the rollicking shamelessness of Falstaff, as easily as one of commoner clay would change his boots. And when he turns to writing, it is again his versatility that impresses us most. The tale from which the present collection of short stories takes its name is a piece of sentimentality, not untinted with melodrama. It is followed by a fragment of sheer clever extravagance. Later on we find in "The Stout Gentleman" melodrama equally sheer and stunningly innocent of any softer sentiment at all. Two of the stories, at least, suggest bad dreams of nights; one, "God is Good," is a scrap of pure pathos; and the Presidential Address to the Birmingham Midland Institute displays a considerable amount of shrewd common sense and plain truth, as for example, "Some people are born educated. . . . Book learning is not wisdom," in pointing out the difference between Shakespeare with his instinctive knowledge of humanity untrammelled by precept, and the lettered Bacon hampered by a petty ego. In versatility, then, Sir Herbert, as an actor and as a writer, is consistent. But when we come to humour a difference appears. His acting is always instinct with humour, but of a quality that brings a lump to the throat and makes the brilliant stage a little blurred in outline now and then. His stories are humorous, too, but with a touch of cynicism that quite precludes any such emotionality. Thus, in "God is Good," where a girl-mother and her child are saved from starvation by selling a cracked mug to an old clo' man for five shillings, one is left with a vision of the mean Jew selling the mug for many pounds. In another story the man whose pride and love are centred in his son is shown in a single gesture of the boy that his dead wife and his dearest friend have betrayed his honour, and so on. This humour is cruel. Nevertheless, Sir Herbert has given us a brilliant bookful, and we are glad to be able to commend it with a clear conscience, since the proceeds from the sale thereof are to be devoted to the fund for actors disabled in the war.

Utinam: A Glimmering of Goddesses, by William Arkwright. (The Bodley Head, 5s.)

IN these grey days when the most frivolous have become serious perforce, and we are all engaged in the unpleasant task of looking facts—and finances—in the face, it is a joy to come across a fragment of sheer sparkling nonsense like "Utinam." "Utinam" was a young Cypress (var. Westermanni, to be exact), but her next-door neighbour, a "Taxodium," which piqued itself on its scholarship and used to laugh at the Teutonic dog-latinity of botanical titles, called her "Utinam" and proceeded to explain that this word was the Latin for "Would that!"—an adverbial interjection that stood eternally for discontent. Thanks to a speaking acquaintance with the Olympians, Utinam managed to get herself changed from a cypress into a peacock and so through a variety of things into a Suffragette (this last by the Devil's good offices). Pan, it was who taught her the only wisdom that she acquired in her various metamorphoses. Truly her experiences had been unfortunate. As a peacock her tutor was a coquettish but elderly peahen; as a woman she failed utterly. Owing to a quarrel with Diana she was condemned to pass some time as an owl in a church belfry, where "she would sit stiffly during Divine Service while the neap tide of Anglican theology purled on at lower level; and ebbed; and flowed again!" and it was through the intervention of a new curate, "a tiny being, but one endowed with an astonishing development of larynx and trachea," that she became acquainted with the Evil One. But Pan taught her the wisdom that is the key to successful living. "Happiness," he said, "is not so much a trophy as a state: a state not active, but passive. It does not exist as a concrete objective, rather is it an abstract harmony that proceeds from attainment to the Divine, the Universal Will. All the concretes pass away—sooner or later the gods themselves are left behind, floating in the bygone, but abstractions, such as Contentment and its child, Happiness, are eternal and therefore realities." . . . The book is apparently a satire on the modern woman before "the period that stopped short on the fourth of August, 1914"; but whatever it is meant for it is decidedly clever and amusing.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE NEW EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA.



IN UNIFORM.

SIR,—There is no crowned head in Europe so little known to Englishmen as the new Emperor of Austria, beyond the facts published in any book about Royal families. His youth and the fact that no one thought he would so soon be Emperor were the reasons why he was not more noticed by travellers in Austria, and even by Austrians themselves. The favourite grandson of the aged Emperor, and a charming boy, was not unnaturally brought up to enjoy the sporting life of a family of real sportsmen. His father, a failure in most matters, at any rate could ride, and ride well; and all the family of Hapsburgs know how to shoot chamoix and stags, like gentlemen should. So it happens that a young sportsman has risen to a throne among our enemies, and is faced by a bully, a man who is not a sportsman, and whose stock is the same. Now, whether the Emperor Charles is pro-Ally, or really for peace, we do not know; but we suspect it; his wife is an ally brought up in England, and his advisers are all anti-Hun. Now I will back a sportsman any day against an unsporting bully. The Kaiser left him hurriedly after their first meeting with a cold in the head or feet, it was not clear in which, and I think that was almost the first straw which showed the way the wind blew. One little story will show the man as a stalker. The Prince Charles was after chamoix among the mountains, and above him towered a wall of rock, with apparently no foothold anywhere. But there was enough for chamoix, one of which appeared crossing above the stalker. He fired and bowled the buck over. It lay, caught by a small bush, over a deep chasm, and a fall would have meant a broken horn and a good head ruined; also the bush seemed to be bending a little already. So the Prince, against his men's advice, climbed up himself and, risking the royal neck, severed the head from the body, kicked the remains over the edge, and with infinite trouble regained the level with the horns safely.

Such a man will not be bullied, and I think we may watch his dealings with the arch-bully with interest and confidence.—Q.



THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF AUSTRIA
ON HOLIDAY IN THE SEMMERING.

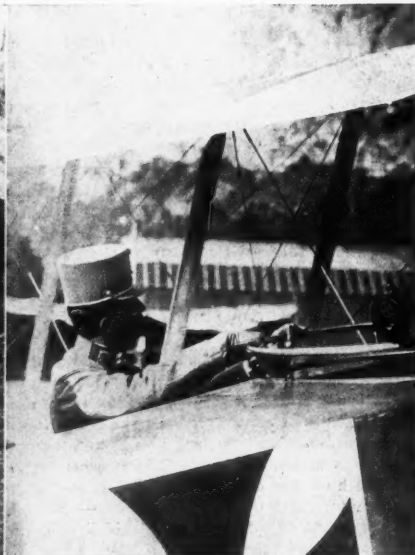


TOBOGGANING WITH THE EMPRESS AND HER
BROTHERS.



EMPEROR AND SPORTSMAN.

Photographed at Murzzuschlag.



AS AN AVIATOR.

A photograph taken on the Italian front.

THE COTTAGER'S PIG.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reviewing the difficulties in the way of cottagers' pig-rearing it is well to realise that, though some of them are experts, it is only a percentage that have the experience that weighs to a great extent against the many risks of illness and disaster in the shape of cramp, fever, killing the young, and the many sudden and alarming illnesses pigs seem to suffer from. The co-operative plan seems the best one for raising a large increase of pigs if a really experienced, first-rate man could be in charge and always on the spot. He could well be beyond the age to serve his country otherwise, and help could be organised. The pigs would miss the individual attention of the cottage master or mistress, and I do not think the latter would feel it a grievance to do the feeding—she always has, except perhaps on Saturday afternoon and Sunday, and if any find the pail too heavy, they can do as I do, and drag it in an old child's cart—most cottages possess a sugar-box on wheels! Pigs get very tame, too, with cottage homes, an essential thing when the time for the litter comes, when they seem to resent strangers' visits. I suppose that breeding would be the most important work at the co-operative sties. I hear there is already an increasing demand for little pigs to fatten, and the prohibitive price of meal just at this most unfortunate season when garden stuff is so scarce has caused the sad disappearance of a great many litters it would have cost too much to keep. One objection to the co-operative system is the fear of infection. A great many pigs were kept in a field near here at small expense owing to the camp refuse, and at first it was a very paying affair, then suddenly came a visitation of swine fever and forty promising young pigs had to be killed and buried deeply and the land left unoccupied for the specified time. This is not an isolated case by any means when the pigs were fed on the great waste from the camp.—EMMA WRIGLEY.

THE PRICE OF BREAD IN 1795-96.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—During the period of the issuing of the eighteenth century tokens many were struck not actually for currency, but rather to promulgate certain political or other ideas. A number of tokens having reference to the price of bread were struck. Some of the designs are as follows: A beggar soliciting and receiving alms—*I was hungry and ye gave me meat.* Another: A portrait of the Duke of Beaufort—*He feels his peoples wants & relieves them.* Another: Below a portcullis as a crest, and between an oak branch and one of laurel, an inscription in ten lines—*To the illustrious Duke of Beaufort the friend of mankind & his worthy tenants who reduced the price of their wheat to 9s. pr. bushel. A.D. 1795. Another: Success to the cultivation of waste lands, surrounding a plough and a harrow. Another: A pair of scales, some weights in one pan, in the other a small loaf, between the pans—3½ lbs. 1s. worth of bread 1795-96. Good Lord deliver us. Another: A vessel in full sail—*Corn imported by Government 1796. Another: A pair of scales. In one pan, weights; in the other, a large loaf. Between the pans—6½ lbs. bread for 1s. April 1796. God be praised.* The dies for these designs were "muled" as so to produce quite a number of "varieties" of tokens. On a penny-size token issued in 1800 the price of wheat is stated to be *But 22 shillings a bushel.*—S. H. HAMER.*

PIGEONS AS FOOD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A year ago I addressed a letter to you suggesting that the varieties of pigeons kept in the country for table purposes might easily be improved, the small, common sorts not being worth housing. May I again recur to the subject, in the belief that a minor, but useful, source of food production is being neglected? Pigeons require very little attention, the cost of their keep is infinitesimal, yet they make a wholesome, palatable and nutritious food. As a commercial proposition the profits per head would be too small to make it worth one's while, except on a considerable scale; then, I have no doubt, it might mean as good an income as can be derived from any of the minor industries. On the Continent and in America squab rearing is carried on extensively, and, presumably, profitably, but I admit that wholesale prices are not tempting. One would need to establish a direct market. For saving the meat bill in an ordinary household, however, the case is on another footing. Undoubtedly the best varieties to obtain are those known as Carneau and Mondaines, which are mainly used on the Continent, but as these are not to be had in any quantities, a very satisfactory substitute can be found in Dragoons, which are fairly plentiful. Although kept here mainly as fancy pigeons, they are hardy and prolific, and I have killed plenty of squabs weighing over a pound each. Compare this weight with that of the common pigeon, and see what a difference there is. Although the original cost might possibly run to a guinea a pair, when we consider the numbers that four or five pairs would produce in a year, the outlay does not seem excessive. Some might be procured for less than that. Runts run to nearly double the size, but, being clumsy birds, I do not think they would be as manageable. The best nesting-places are ordinary sugar boxes, set on the floor, containing an earthenware pan gin, in diameter, half filled with sawdust.—SIGMA.

MORE KIPLING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Can someone tell me where to find what I believe to be another "Kipling poem," in which these lines occur?

"Our England is a garden, and such gardens are not made
By singing 'Oh! how beautiful,' and sitting in the shade."

In the same volume I remember some verses on big machinery—called, I think, "The Song of the Machines"—but have never come across either since. They are not in "Songs and Verses," and I thought I had all Kipling's published works.—F. H. T.

[The verses "Our England is a Garden" appear in Fletcher and Kipling's School History of England, in which also you will find "The Song of the Machines." These have not been reprinted in any collection of verse.—ED.]

ORCHIDS IN SURREY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I owe an acknowledgment to Mr. Alec Harvey and Viscountess Peel for the trouble they have taken in endeavouring to supply the correct botanical description of my list of wild orchids noted at Gatton, and I am sorry that, owing to clerical errors and the lack of time or opportunity of consulting botanical works, my letter was not sufficiently edited. Many of the orchids in question were introduced into my orchid group at Holland House Show in 1907 (*vide* "Orchid Review," August, 1907, page 242). I will not risk a quotation of the botanical names therein given, which will suggest fresh difficulties of nomenclature; but if your correspondents will refer to the Review, and for "Lastria" read "Listera," and for "Aura" "Aceras" in my letter of November 26th, I hope that they will be no longer puzzled.—JEREMIAH COLMAN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reply to Viscountess Peel's query as to the identity of "Aura anthropophora," I think it must be "Aceras anthropophora," the Green Man Orchid. It resembles the genus *Orchis*, but the lip is spurless. It is about 9 in. high and of a greenish yellow colour. It gets its name from the resemblance of the flower to a man, the central lobe, which is cleft at the lower end, forming the legs and trunk, and the lateral lobes, the arms. On June 18th last year I found a solitary specimen of this orchid by the roadside between Tadworth and Betchworth. It is, I believe, rather rare in Surrey, and Bentham states that it is only found in the Eastern Counties, though a correspondent of August last mentions it being observed near Guildford. It is figured in the illustrations to Bentham and Hooker's "Flora of Britain."—G. E. MAYNARD.

THE "ROUGH AND SAVAGE" FEMALE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In looking through Augustus Hare's book, "Memorials of a Quiet Life," published many years ago, I have just come across the following, written in a letter by his (adopted) mother from a small village in Wiltshire, in the year 1830: "The system of all the women and girls acting as field labourers, ploughing and shepherding, etc., in itself produces a rough and savage state of society." Will history repeat itself? One rather wonders.—A. L. T.

GOOD OATS OR POOR WHEAT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In making a crop census of this parish recently for the County War Agricultural Committee, I asked one farmer, who intended putting in another ten acres of winter wheat, how late he could sow it with a fair prospect of success. His answer was that on that particular farm he had never had a good crop of winter wheat if sown later than November 30th, and he preferred to get it all in in October, if possible. He would prefer to devote the ten acres in question to barley or oats, being more certain of a good yield; but the cry now was all for wheat, and wheat he supposed he must put in if the weather made it at all possible. I venture to think that a great mistake, and am hoping that in this weather he will not be able to get it in. It is foodstuffs we need; not necessarily wheat only. In this part of the country, people do not know the value of oats and barley as human food, but they would soon learn how to use them, and we shall find better protection against submarines and a *fax Germanica* in good crops of barley and oats than in indifferent crops of wheat.—B. C. F., Dorset.

ANIMALS AND YEW LEAVES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

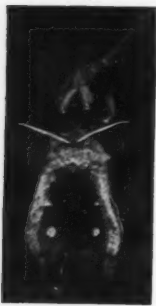
SIR,—The yew tree is certainly poisonous to calves. It causes their death in a short time under very distressing circumstances. I had a poor little Jersey calf which I, unfortunately, tethered too near a yew tree. Soon discovering my mistake, I moved him, but too late, for within a few hours he died. It is said you should never give them water or moist food if you know they have eaten yew, and that sometimes they recover, but not if they have any moist food or water too soon.—B. H.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

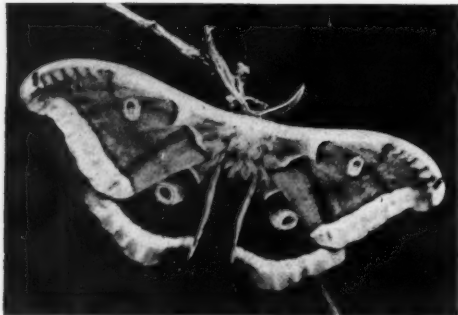
SIR,—Referring to a letter in your paper, I write to say that when on a visit to Wells five years ago I was told that branches from the old yew tree growing in the cloisters of the cathedral there were carried in former days in procession on Palm Sunday. Could it be that the tree was planted for this purpose?—FINLAY SANDERSON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The presence of yews in churchyards is generally explained by the former importance of the wood for making bows, and the consequent planting of the tree in public enclosures over which the authorities had more or less power. I am much less surprised at the reluctance of workmen to destroy a venerable Argyllshire yew than at the fact that such a penalty for the gastronomic indiscretion of a few pheasants should have been proposed and, apparently, carried out. The question of the poisonous nature of yew leaves and berries seems a very obscure one; yet one would have thought that analysis by a twentieth century chemist could have settled it before now. Apparently we may take it that the berries are fatal to pheasants; then why not to thrushes, which during the berry season used to appear by the half-dozen in the two large yews which overhung the entrance gate of my garden in Gloucestershire? These birds evidently revelled in the fruit. Is it in the pulp or in the seeds that danger is supposed to lie? I cannot now recollect whether there were any distinct signs of the thrushes taking the one and rejecting the other; besides, one would think that in the course of a feast



JUST EMERGED.

AN HOUR
LATER.

THE PERFECT MOTH.

strong flight of the male. This species is found native in North America.—M.

KESTREL AND STARLING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Two friends have given me an interesting account of a fight they witnessed about a fortnight ago between a kestrel and a starling. The incident occurred in Essex, near the north shore of the Lower Thames. The two birds fell fighting on the grass near a hut, the kestrel being uppermost. Both the combatants were so occupied with their quarrel that the two spectators were able to approach within a couple of yards and watch the progress of the affair. Then the kestrel became aware of their presence and fluttered up groggily, flew a few yards and pitched, apparently exhausted, under the hut. The starling, on the contrary, appeared to be none the worse, and flew straight away quite strongly. After a time the kestrel recovered its strength and also flew away. The starling had evidently made good use of its sharp beak, as several of the hawk's feathers remained on the field of battle.—FLEUR-DE-LYS.

ITALIAN DRAUGHT OXEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a photograph of an ox team at Lugano which I hope may be

which seemed to last for hours a certain amount of pulp would needs be swallowed with the seeds, or that a stray seed or two would slip down with the pulp. Again, yews were very plentiful in that district—the Wyese border of Gloucestershire; yet I do not remember to have heard, during a residence of more than seven years, of any accident to animals through swallowing the leaves. Books generally state that the berries are dangerous, if not fatal, to human beings, and the leaves to horses; as to cattle and sheep opinion seems divided, instances being quoted upon either side. Cannot the question be settled once for all by modern science?—ARTHUR O. COOKE.

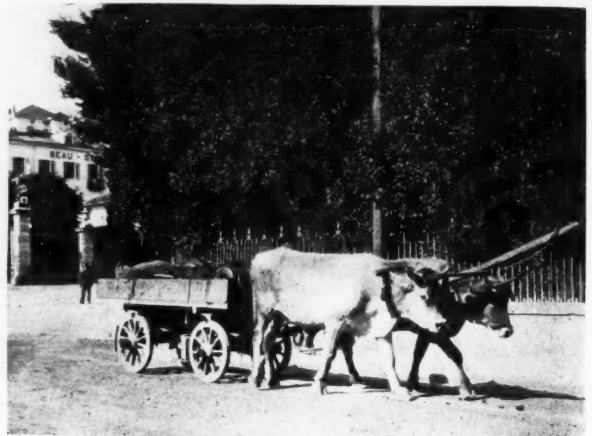
THE EMERGENCE OF TELEA POLYPHEMUS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—This is an event very seldom witnessed by the average person. The principal colouring of this moth is buff and grey, relieved by more vivid markings and eye spots. The perfect moth measures 6in. from tip to tip across the upper wings, and rests often in the position shown in Fig. 3. The actual emergence takes place about May, the insect having remained in the chrysalis state during the winter. When first it emerges it moistens the silk with a fluid from the mouth, the silk yielding slowly by the repeated heaving of the insect within, and at last it pushes through the end of the cocoon, to appear all wet, as a dog from the water. From this moment the growth of the wings begins. Fig. 1 shows the development seven minutes after, the wings being even now double their original length. So rapid is this growth that the movement can be easily detected. In about an hour's time the process is complete and the growth stops, the wings hanging down, still limp and wet, as in Fig. 2. In another hour the wings have sufficiently hardened, and the insect begins slowly and deliberately to open and close them. After resting motionless with wings extended till nightfall a change begins to take place. The wings are rapidly

vibrated at intervals, and the insect appears to be in a state of excitement. This is the prelude to the first flight, but although both sexes may be seen in flight, the female is usually content with short distances, and has not the

suitable for your "Correspondence" columns. There is an interesting contrast between these sleek and powerful beasts drawing their up-to-date load of a lorry containing motor machinery along the trim boulevards of that prosperous city and the little black and brown beasts in the primitive



HAULAGE OXEN AT LUGANO.

wilds of Andalusia, as depicted in a photograph of mine which you published in July last.—H. S. VAUGHAN.

CAN BIRDS COUNT?

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The following may be of interest: The late Lord Avebury, Professor Büchner, Leroy, Combe and others consider it indubitable that birds of the corbie tribe have notions of numbers up to a certain point. I had a blind jackdaw which would count the bars of his sleeping cage before jumping on to his perch. He was loose by day, and found his food, water, etc., by touching objects that he knew with his beak. A jackdaw belonging to "C. E. L." took it into his head to always sleep on the seventh stair from the bottom. It was curious to see him pondering in his mind as to which it was. Sometimes he would go up three times before he felt quite sure it was the seventh stair; then he would rub his little head against the banister, and if very tired took no notice of us going to bed.—T. S. HAWKINS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have been much interested in the notes in COUNTRY LIFE as to whether birds can count. According to "M. G. S. B.'s" observation, she seems to think they can, particularly oyster-catchers; but from my own experience I should say they could not. I have put up "hides" overnight by three different oyster-catchers' nests. The birds were always on the nest next morning when we arrived. The first time two friends came with me, and left when I was settled in the "hide." About twenty minutes after they had gone the bird returned, but was at first very suspicious, having a good look round before going on to her nest. The second time only my sister came with me; then the bird returned in about ten minutes. That was when the accompanying illustration was taken. The third time I went alone, and that time the bird never returned.—ELEANOR SHIFFNER.



AN OYSTER-CATCHER THAT COULD NOT COUNT.